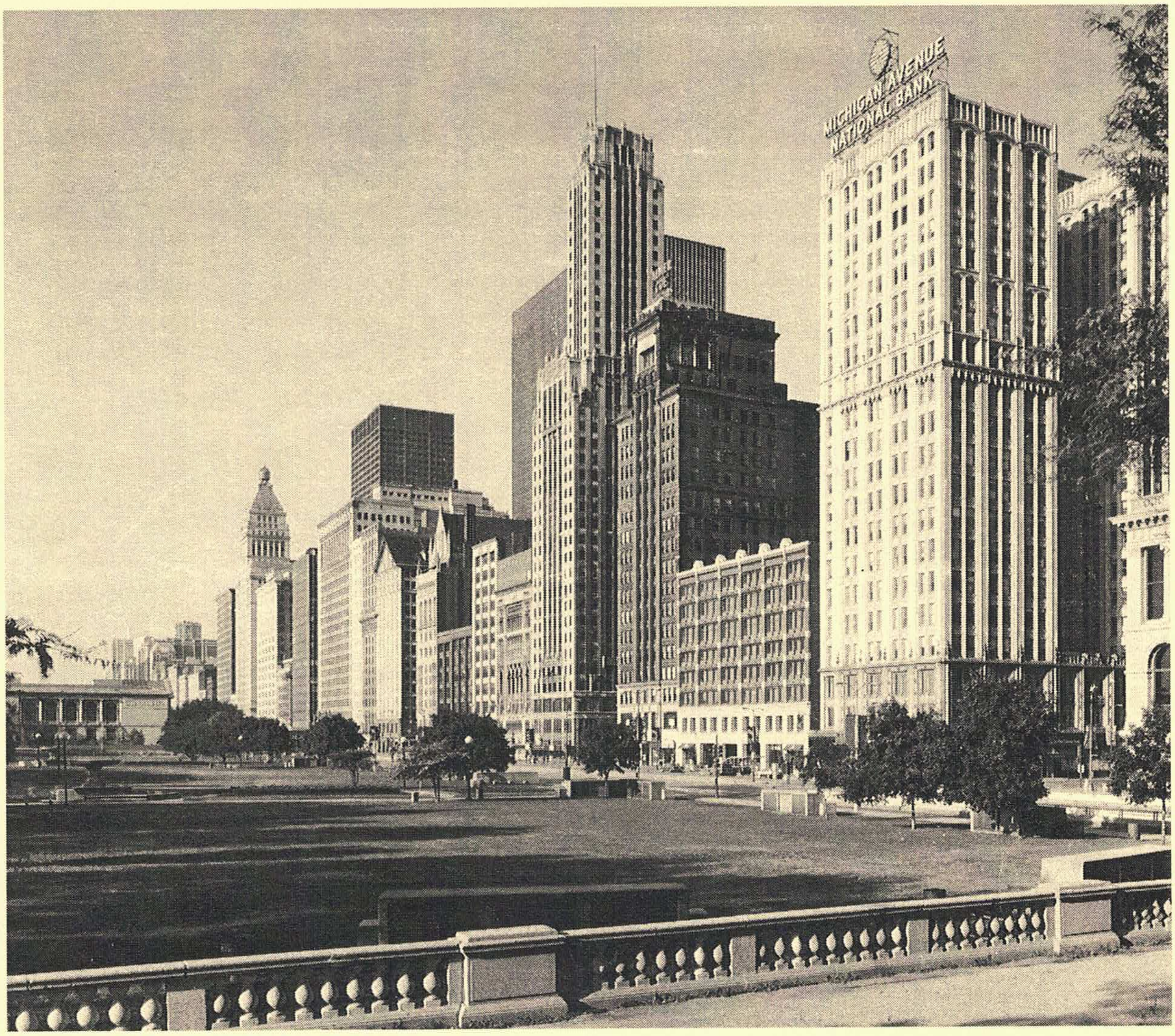
PRELIMINARY STAFF SUMMARY OF INFORMATION


MICHIGAN AVENUE NATIONAL BANK

Historic Michigan Boulevard District

SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS
AUGUST 4 AND OCTOBER 6, 1993

CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Valerie B. Jarrett, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The Commission makes its recommendation to the City Council only after careful consideration. The process begins with an extensive staff study, summarized in this report, which discusses the historical and architectural background and significance of the proposed landmark.

The next step--a preliminary determination by the Commission that the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration--is important because it places the review of building permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission during the remainder of the designation process.

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the Commission's recommendation to the City Council should be regarded as final.

COVER: A view of the Michigan Avenue streetwall, looking south from Grant Park (photograph by Bob Thall).

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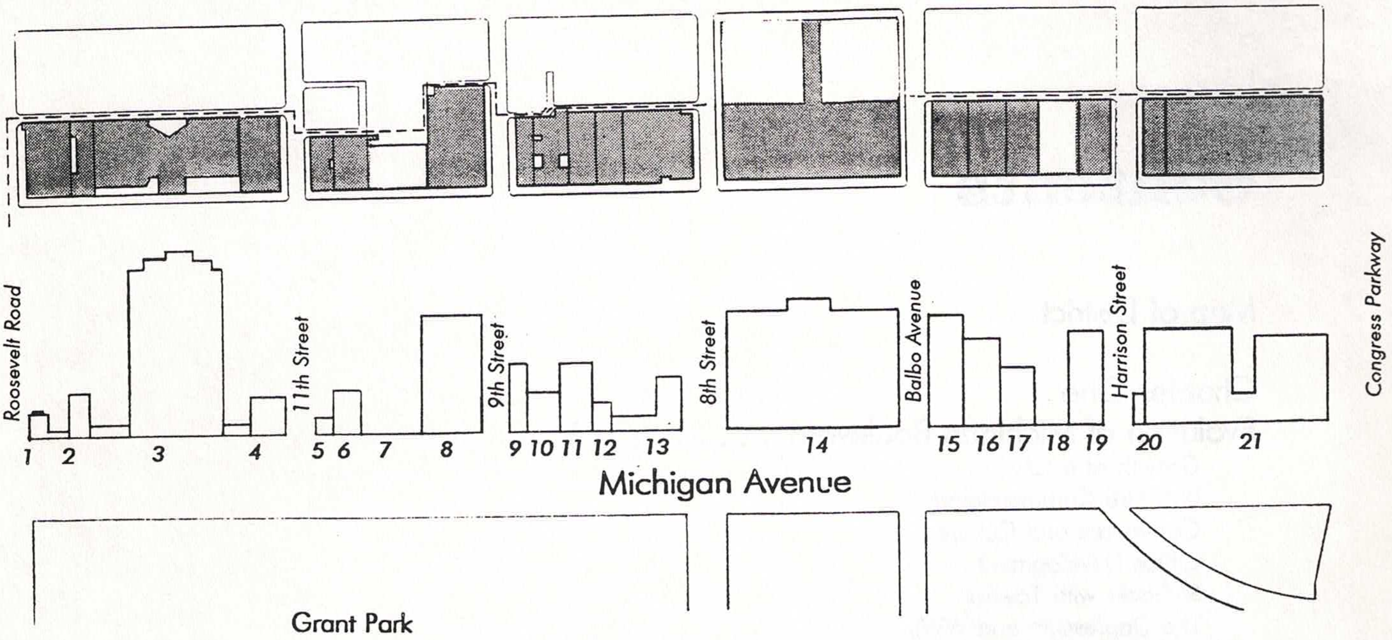
Roosevelt Road
11th Street
9th Street
8th Street
Balbo Avenue
Harrison Street
Congress Parkway
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12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
Michigan Avenue
Grant Park

1. **AVENUE MOTEL**
1154 S. Michigan Ave.
1957
50 ft., 12 ft. (garage)

2. **BORDEAUX HOTEL**
(Park Avenue Hotel)
1140 S. Michigan Ave.
1891
100 ft.

3. **1130 S. MICHIGAN AVE.**
1130 S. Michigan Ave.
1964
387 ft., 410 ft.

4. **ASCOT HOUSE AND HOTEL**
(Grant Park Hotel)
1100 S. Michigan Ave.
1960
90 ft.

5. **SHERWOOD CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC**
1014 S. Michigan Ave.
1912
50 ft.

6. **GRAPHIC ARTS BUILDING**
(Lightner Building)
1006 S. Michigan Ave.
1904
100 ft.

7. **920 S. MICHIGAN AVE.**
Vacant Lot

8. **KARPEN-STANDARD OIL BUILDING**
910 S. Michigan Ave.
1911, 1927
272 ft.

9. **CRANE COMPANY BUILDING**
836 S. Michigan Ave.
1912-13
155 ft.

10. **YWCA**
830 S. Michigan Ave.
1894-95
100 ft.

11. **JOHNSON PUBLISHING CO.**
820 S. Michigan Ave.
1969
140 ft.

12. **AMERICAN RADIATOR BUILDING**
(East-West University)
816 S. Michigan Ave.
1903, 1957, 1966
66 ft.

13. **ESSEX INN**
800 S. Michigan Ave.
1961
129 ft., 40 ft. (garage)

14. **STEVENS HOTEL**
(Chicago Hilton and Towers)
720 S. Michigan Ave.
1925-27
265 ft.; 272 ft.(penthouse)

15. **BLACKSTONE HOTEL**
636 S. Michigan Ave.
1908
253 ft.

16. **MUSICAL COLLEGE**
(Columbia College)
624 S. Michigan Ave.
1908, 1922
192 ft.

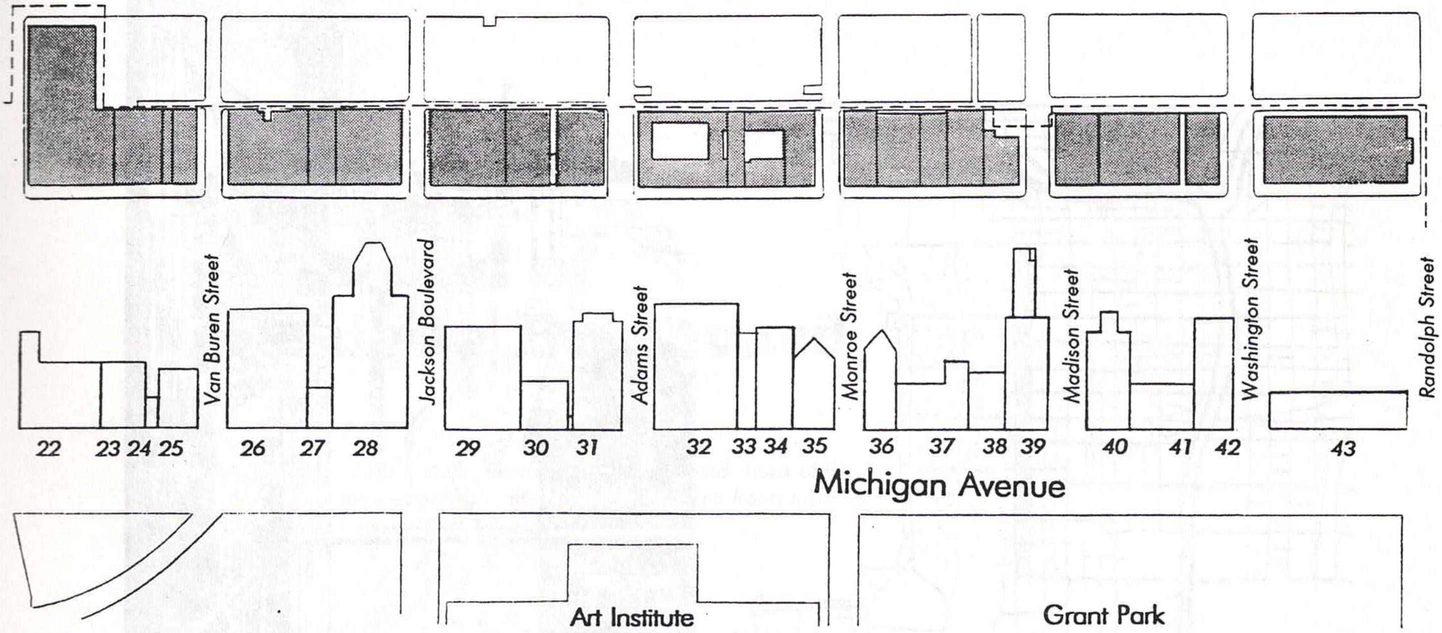
17. **ARCADE BUILDING**
(Spertus College)
618 S. Michigan Ave.
1913, 1958
132 ft.

18. **610 S. MICHIGAN**
Vacant Lot

19. **HARVESTER BUILDING**
(Columbia College)
600 S. Michigan Ave.
1907
208 ft.

20. **CONGRESS HOTEL ANNEX**
538 S. Michigan Ave.
1958
65 ft.

21. **CONGRESS HOTEL**
520 S. Michigan Ave.
1893, 1902, 1907
160 ft.(N); 175 ft.(S)


Van Buren Street
Jackson Boulevard
Adams Street
Monroe Street
Madison Street
Washington Street
Randolph Street
22
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25
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29
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31
32
33
34
35
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37
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40
41
42
43
Michigan Avenue
Art Institute
Grant Park

22. THE AUDITORIUM
430 S. Michigan Ave.
1886-90
140 ft.; 220 ft.(tower)

23. FINE ARTS BUILDING
410 S. Michigan Ave.
1885, 1898
150 ft.

24. FINE ARTS ANNEX
408 S. Michigan Ave.
1891, c.1910
65 ft.

25. CHICAGO CLUB
81 E. Van Buren St.
1929-30
120 ft.

26. McCORMICK BUILDING
332 S. Michigan Ave.
1908-1910, 1911-1912
260 ft.

27. KARPEN BUILDING
318 S. Michigan Ave.
1885, 1899
76 ft.

28. STRAUS BUILDING
(Britannica Center)
310 S. Michigan Ave.
1923-24
284 ft., 412 ft.(tower)

29. RAILWAY EXCHANGE
(Santa Fe Building)
224 S. Michigan Ave.
1903-04
235 ft.

30. ORCHESTRA HALL
220 S. Michigan Ave.
1904-05, 1907-08
102 ft.

31. BORG-WARNER
200 S. Michigan Ave.
1958
240 ft., 258 ft.(penthouse)

32. PEOPLES GAS
122 S. Michigan Ave.
1910-11
272 ft.

33. MUNICIPAL COURTS
116 S. Michigan Ave.
1906, 1912
220 ft.

34. ILLINOIS ATHLETIC CLUB
112 S. Michigan Ave.
1908, 1985
220 ft.

35. MONROE BUILDING
104 S. Michigan Ave.
1910-12
211 ft.

36. UNIVERSITY CLUB
76 E. Monroe St.
1907-08
218 ft.

37. THE GAGE GROUP
18, 24, 30 S. Michigan Ave.
1898-1900, 1902, 1971
154 ft., 100 ft.

38. CHICAGO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
12 S. Michigan Ave.
1893
136 ft.

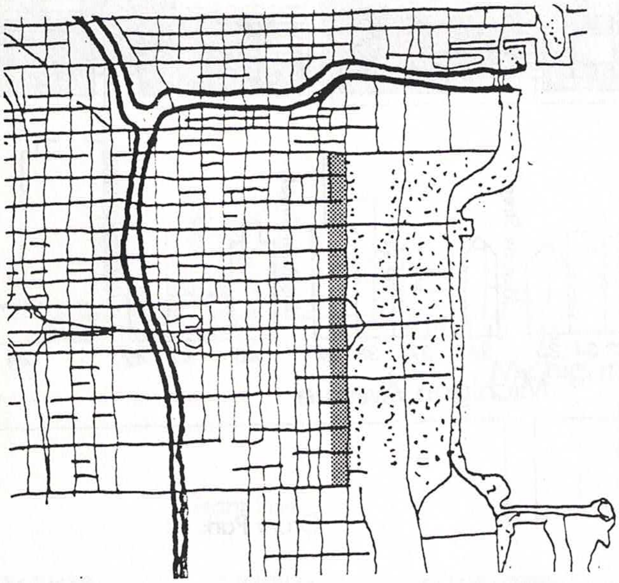
39. WILLOUGHBY TOWER
8 S. Michigan Ave.
1928-29
248 ft., 412 ft. (tower)

40. MONTGOMERY WARD
6 N. Michigan Ave.
1897-99, 1923
220 ft., 270 ft.(addition)

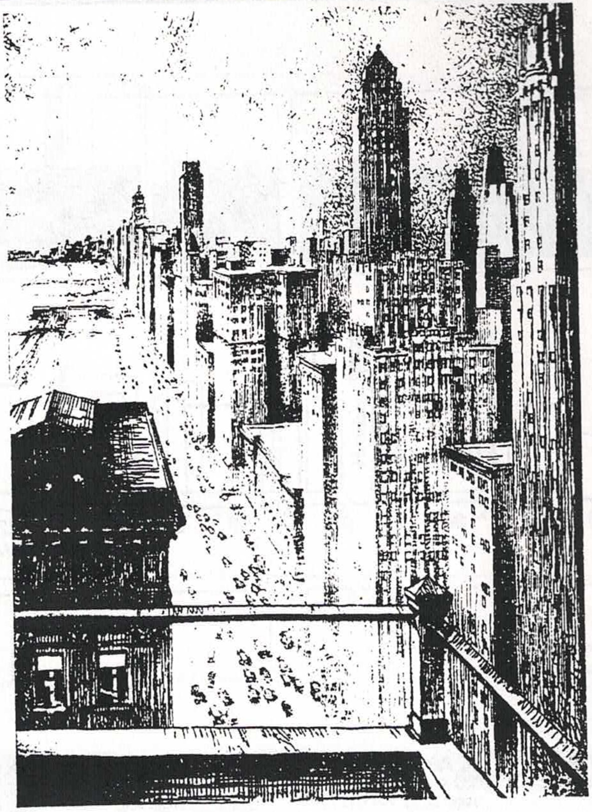
41. SMITH, GAYLORD & CROSS
20 N. Michigan Ave.
1882, 1891
102 ft.

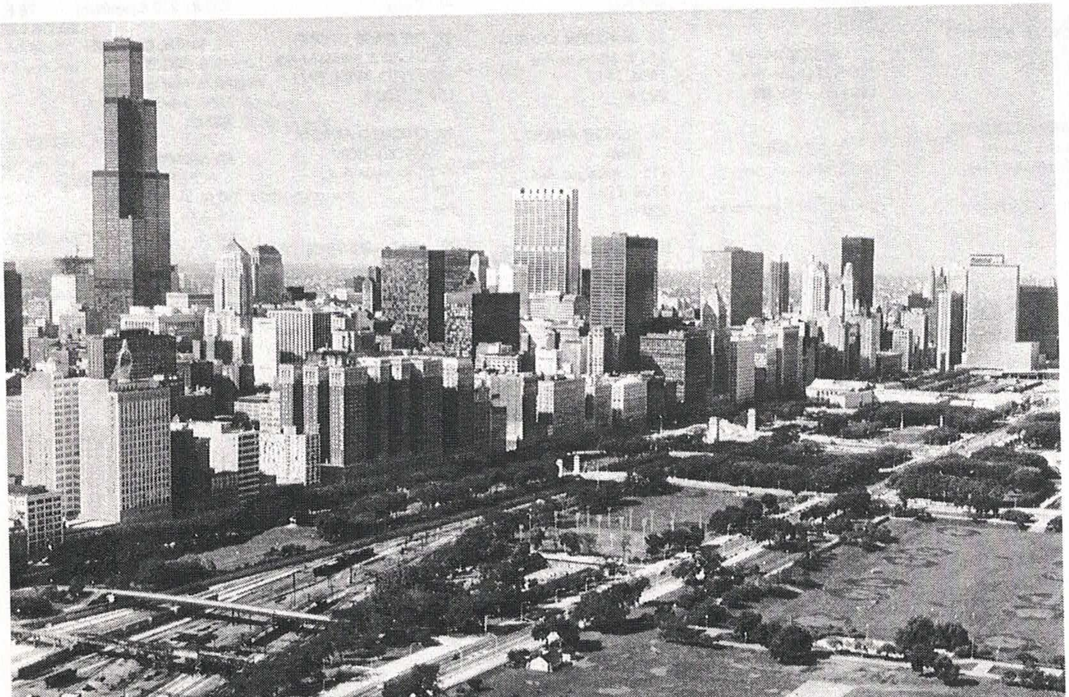
42. MICHIGAN BOULEVARD BUILDING
30 N. Michigan Ave.
1913-14, 1923
250 ft.

43. CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY
(now Cultural Center)
78 E. Washington St.
1892-97, 1977
89 ft.



Proposed Historic Michigan Boulevard District





Above, a 1980 view of the Loop with the Michigan Avenue streetwall running diagonally across the photo, from Roosevelt Road, at left, to Randolph Street, at right. Top right, a 1933 drawing, looking south from the roof of 333 N. Michigan.

Chapter One

Evolution of Michigan Boulevard

Office buildings, hotels, clubs, theaters, music-halls, and shops of the first order...line the western side, the park opposite their fronts insuring light, air, and an agreeable outlook.

Plan of Chicago,
1909

It is a family of Matterhorns [extending] unbroken along Michigan Avenue, overlooking a green checkered front yard....There is no other urban skyline quite like it in the world.

Chicago: A Portrait,
1931

The palisade of buildings along [Michigan Avenue]...gives the town one of the most impressive skylines and water vistas one could find--vigorous, serene, monumental.

New Yorker magazine,
1963

This stretch of streetscape has a coherence and dignity unmatched in urban America.

Fragments of Chicago's Past,
1990

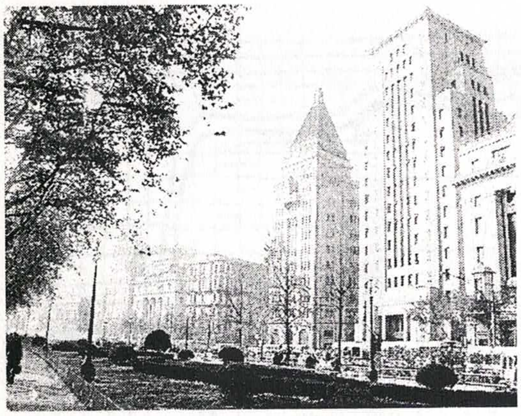
The Michigan Avenue "streetwall" along Grant Park is one of the most enduring images of Chicago. Millions see it every year; as the backdrop to lakefront festivals and concerts, as the view one sees on leaving several of the city's great museums, as the vista seen while driving by on Lake Shore Drive or sailing on Lake Michigan; or on the "wish-you-were-here" postcards sent around the world.

The wall of buildings also crystallizes much of what is emblematic of the city: an incomparable natural setting along Lake Michigan, bordered by great parks and internationally recognized architecture. The overall effect of the ensemble seems as if some of the best of Chicago architecture gathered along the lakefront, and posed for a group photo.

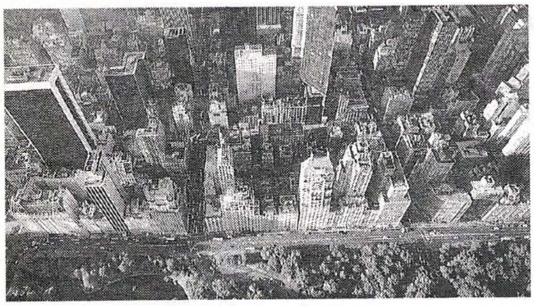
The uniqueness of the streetwall can be viewed also within a context of international significance, as one of the world's famed one-sided thoroughfares.

For instance, the buildings along Fifth Avenue in New York City face Central Park. In Edinburgh, Scotland, Princes Street also fronts on a park, as well as views of the old city's castled rock. The wall of buildings along the Grand Canal in Venice is one of the great images of that city, and the Bund in Shanghai almost exactly duplicates Chicago's streetwall as a dramatic backdrop for that Chinese port.

This 13-block stretch of Michigan Avenue, from Roosevelt Road to Randolph Street, is one of the most familiar and traditional images of Chicago. It reflects the development of the city from a fort on the edge of a lake to a handsome commercial skyline along a magnificent lakefront park.



The Michigan Avenue streetwall ranks with other world-famous, one-sided thoroughfares, such as (above) the Bund in Shanghai and Central Park West in New York City (below).



Growth of a City (1836-71)

The origin of Michigan Avenue as a one-sided street dates to 1836, when the city's first subdivision map labeled all the undivided land east of what was originally called Michigan Boulevard as "Public Ground--A Common to remain forever open, clear, and free of any buildings or other obstruction whatever." The then-small strip of lakefront park quickly became the city's most popular area for public promenading.

The west side of the street began to develop as a fashionable residential area. Early on, however, waves from the lake threatened to eat away the sandy soil on which the avenue was built. In 1852, a grateful city council granted the Illinois Central Railroad an offshore right-of-way, in exchange for construction of a breakwater 400 feet east of the lakeshore. The railroad soon brought thousands of passengers to its Lake Street Station via a trestle built over the shallow water.

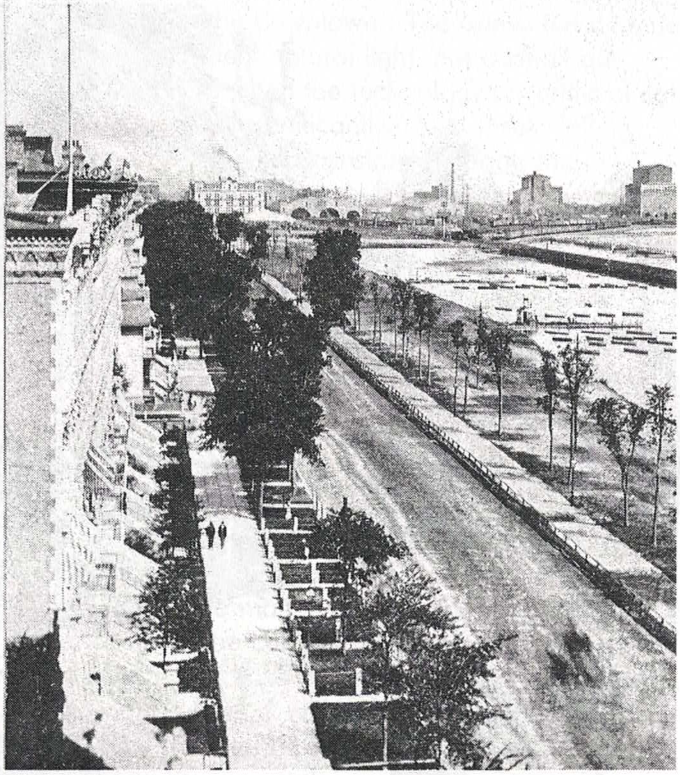
By the 1860s, the west side of the street was lined with the elegant mansions and rowhouses of such prominent Chicago families as Scammon, Sherman, and Sears, as well as the Roman Catholic bishop. The proximity of the lakefront ensured sunlight and lake breezes for these residences.

The so-called Lake (now Grant) Park still remained an undeveloped strip of land along the lakeshore, but, according to an 1868 city guidebook, there were plans to fill in and landscape the basin between the shore and the Illinois Central railroad viaduct, making Michigan Avenue "the finest promenade in the city."

Post-Fire Commercialism (1871-95)

The Chicago Fire of 1871 wiped out most of the structures north of Congress Street. Debris from the fire, however, provided landfill for completing the dream of an expanded Lake Park.

Although the park improvements greatly enhanced the area, the prestigious character of the lakefront was seriously affected when the city issued permits to burned-out businesses for the construction of temporary shanties in Lake Park, south of Harrison Street. Many of

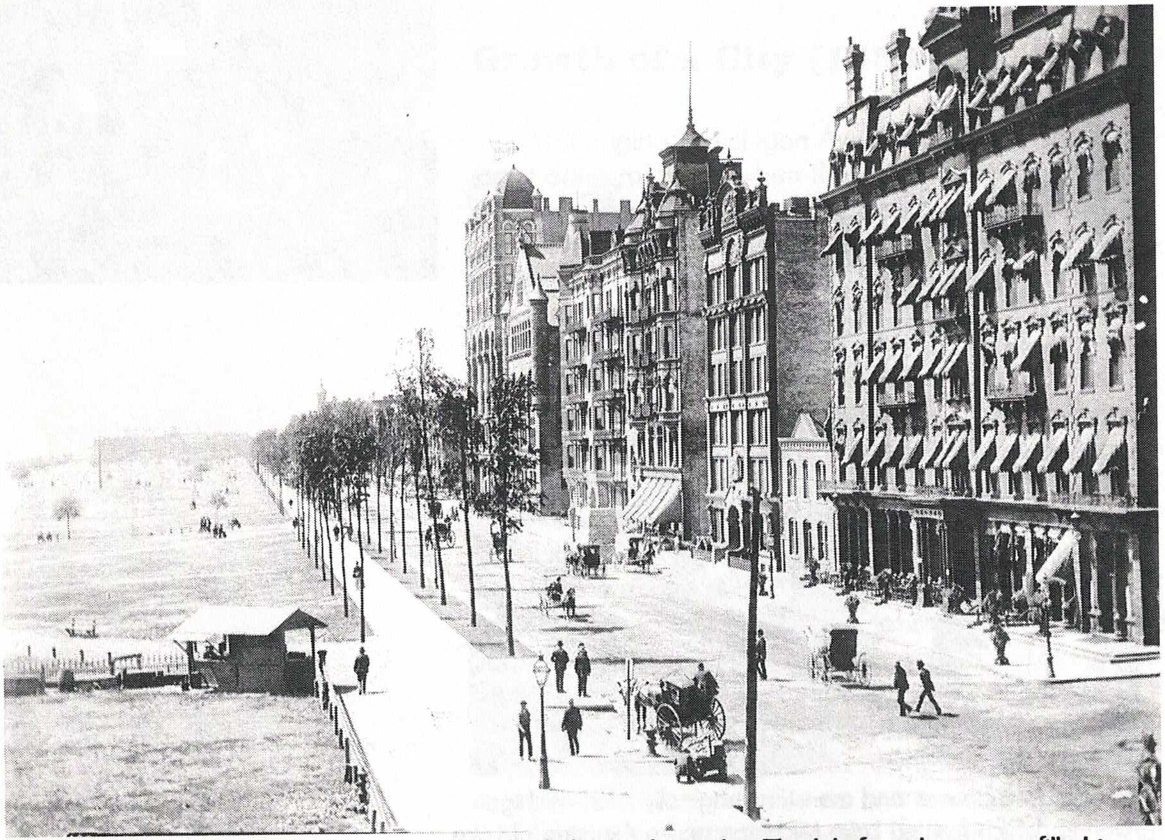


Rows of townhouses and mansions originally lined Michigan Avenue, which fronted Lake Michigan and a thin strip of Lake Park. This 1868-69 photo is looking north from Congress.

the lakefront mansions themselves were taken over by businesses. Appalled by this transformation, one commentator was moved to write: "Down Wabash and Michigan Avenues, hitherto sacred to the finest families, rushed the Visigoths of trade in a wild irresistible horde, with speculation in their eyes." Although a number of affluent residents left the street due to the onslaught of commercialism, many also remained, committed to their singular, urban lakefront sites.

Around this time, the street also began to develop as an ideal location for luxury hotels. One advertisement for the Richelieu Hotel (where the Karpen Building, 318 S. Michigan, now stands) noted the "cool breezes and sunlight" of its new lakefront setting. The street also began to be featured as an attractive esplanade away from the congestion of the central city.

Beginning in the 1880s, showrooms and loft buildings for commercial purposes were constructed along Michigan Avenue to take advantage of the street's location away from the congestion of the Loop. Among them was the Smith, Gaylord & Cross Building (1882;



By 1887, the character of Michigan Avenue had changed greatly. The lakefront basin was filled in, and mansions gave way to such luxury hotels as the Richelieu (middle), south of Jackson.

20 N. Michigan) and the Studebaker Building (1885; 410 S.), whose showrooms were designed to attract Midwesterners shopping for new wagons or carriages.

Commerce and Culture (1885-1900)

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the development of skyscraper technology brought larger buildings to Michigan Avenue. These wider and taller structures began to define the streetwall as it appears today.

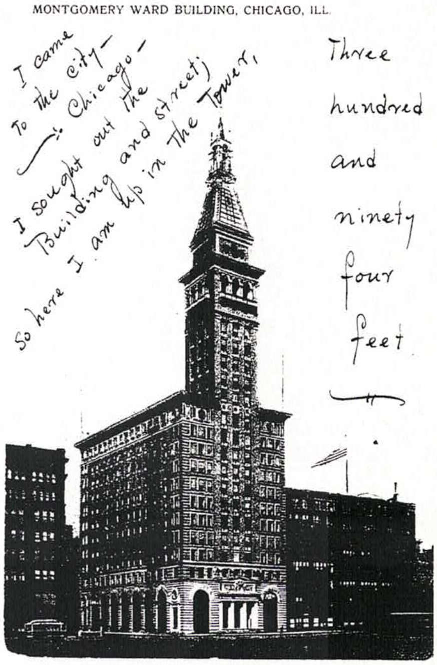
For instance, Adler & Sullivan's Auditorium Building brought additional prominence to the avenue when it was finished in 1890. Its "footprint" stretched all the way back to Wabash Avenue and its tower--the equivalent of a 17-story building--briefly claimed the accolade of being the tallest building in the city. Another large building of this era was the Congress Hotel (1893), designed to complement the Auditorium.

This new high-rise technology meshed well with the street's enduring characteristics of lakefront elegance and proximity to the downtown. The one-sided avenue also offered excellent natural light, not a small advantage in an era when the technology for artificial light had not progressed significantly. As a result, loft buildings still were being constructed along the streetwall, but now--due to steel-frame construction--with larger floor plates than before.

These buildings often were occupied by manufacturing firms, with the buildings themselves providing upscale business images. The best known example is the Montgomery Ward and Company headquarters and catalog warehouse (1899; 6 N. Michigan), whose 394-foot tower and weather vane dominated the streetwall through World War II.

Other examples were the Karpen Building (1899; 318 S.), which housed a furniture company, and the Gage Group (18-30 S.), a trio of buildings erected in 1898-1900 for the manufacture and wholesaling of millinery goods. The companies in these buildings attracted buyers of fine hats from throughout the Midwest.

During this period, Michigan Avenue also began to be known as a center of cultural institutions. The Art Institute's first site was at the southwest corner of



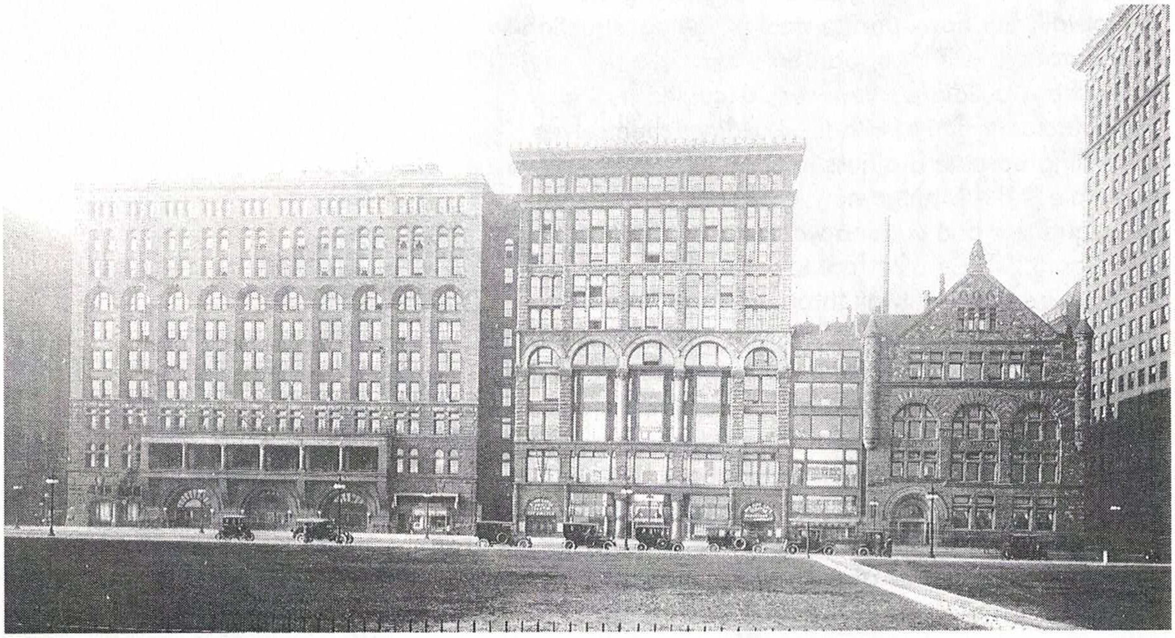
A postcard sent by a visitor to the Montgomery Ward Tower building, c.1905.

Michigan and Van Buren, a location that, its trustees noted, fronted on Lake Michigan but was still close "to the heart of the city." (Within ten years, the museum had outgrown this space and built a new facility, across the street, in Lake Park.)

Meanwhile, next door, the Studebaker Building was remodeled into the Fine Arts Building, a center for artists, writers, and musicians. And, in 1892-97, at the far northern end of the streetwall, a new public library (now the Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington) was built on what had been the site of Dearborn Park.

The construction of Central Station, the Illinois Central Railroad's depot at 12th Street, during the winter of 1892-93 bolstered the emerging commercial character of the south end of the streetwall. The depot, which was located on the east side of Michigan Avenue, facing north, also helped define the southern end of Lake (now Grant) Park.

Two hotels, the Bordeaux (1891; 1140 S.) and the YWCA (1894; 830 S.), were built in the vicinity of Central Station, as well as major buildings at three key corners: the Chicago Manual Training Institute (at 12th Street, now Roosevelt); the C.P. Kimball Carriage Manufacturing Co. Building (11th Street); and the Bucklen Company Building, the headquarters for a



The block between Congress and Van Buren suggests the variety of uses found along Michigan Avenue, c.1910. From left: the Auditorium, the Studebaker/Fine Arts Building, and the original Art Institute.

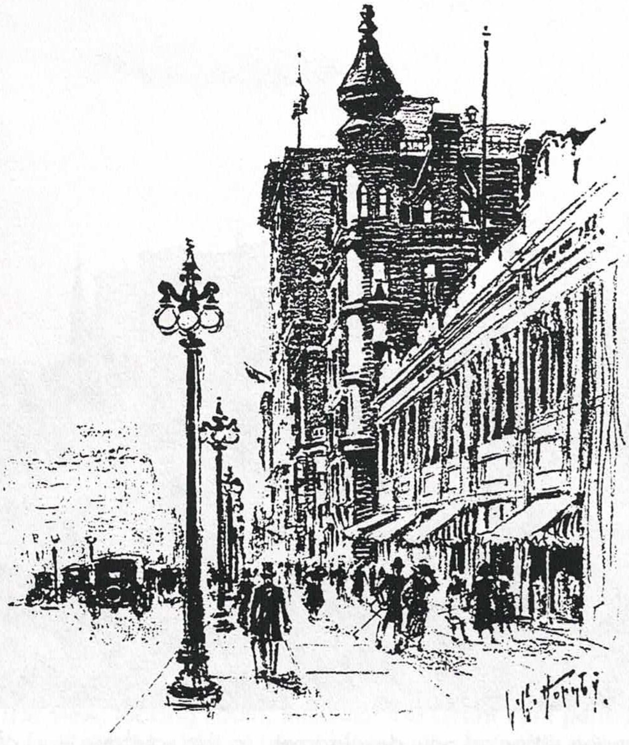
patent medicine concern (8th Street). (All three buildings were demolished in the 1930s; coincidentally, all later became the sites of motels in the 1950s.)

Office Development (1900-20)

The twenty years following the turn of the century witnessed the greatest changes to Michigan Avenue. It is the period that created the street we are familiar with, as half of the buildings that exist today were built then.

Most of these changes were spurred by improvements to the street and to the park, which had been renamed Grant Park in 1901, in honor of President Ulysses S. Grant. Although long planned, most of these improvements came about as a result of the publicity surrounding the Chicago Plan of 1909.

Specially designed "boulevard electrolier" streetlights, new medians, and ornamental entrance canopies to underground pedestrian walkways were installed along a widened Michigan Avenue, which took on the character of a true boulevard. The strip of Grant Park between the roadway and the Illinois Central



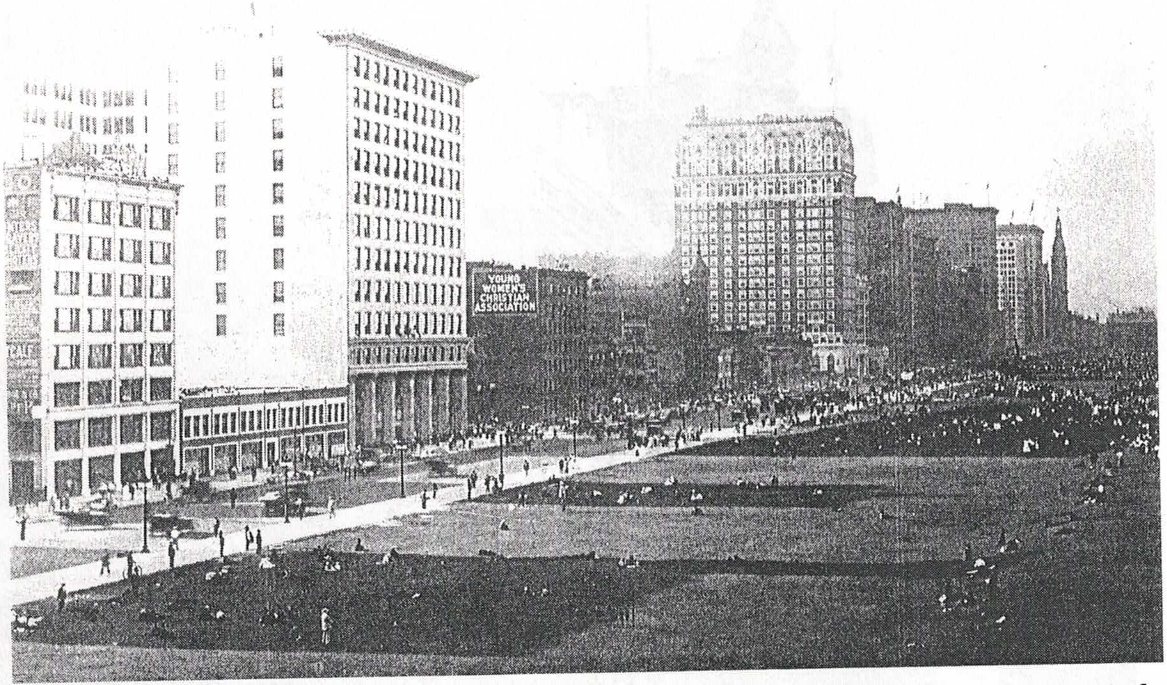
A 1920 sketch of the "boulevard electroliers," one of the public improvements that helped spur private development.

tracks was landscaped and ornamental balustrades were installed to shield the tracks.

Ignoring the street's distinguished past, one 1920 tour book praised this brave new world: "It was hard to induce business and buildings to come here until a few years ago....[Now] it is one of the most wonderful city miles of the world, [holding] shops and office buildings, clubs and hotels, built closely and massively and with splendid effect, and facing out, across a superb roadway, to the water."

The first major office building to take advantage of the prominence of Michigan Avenue was the 17-story Railway Exchange Building at 224 S. Michigan, completed in 1904 by D. H. Burnham and Company. Along with the 22-story Blackstone Hotel (1908; 636 S.) and the Auditorium Building, the Railway Exchange dominated the growing streetwall. The Auditorium's tower no longer soared above the rest.

The success of the Railway Exchange quickly attracted other office developers. Within ten years, at least seven other office buildings were built along the streetwall: the Municipal Courts Building (1906; 116



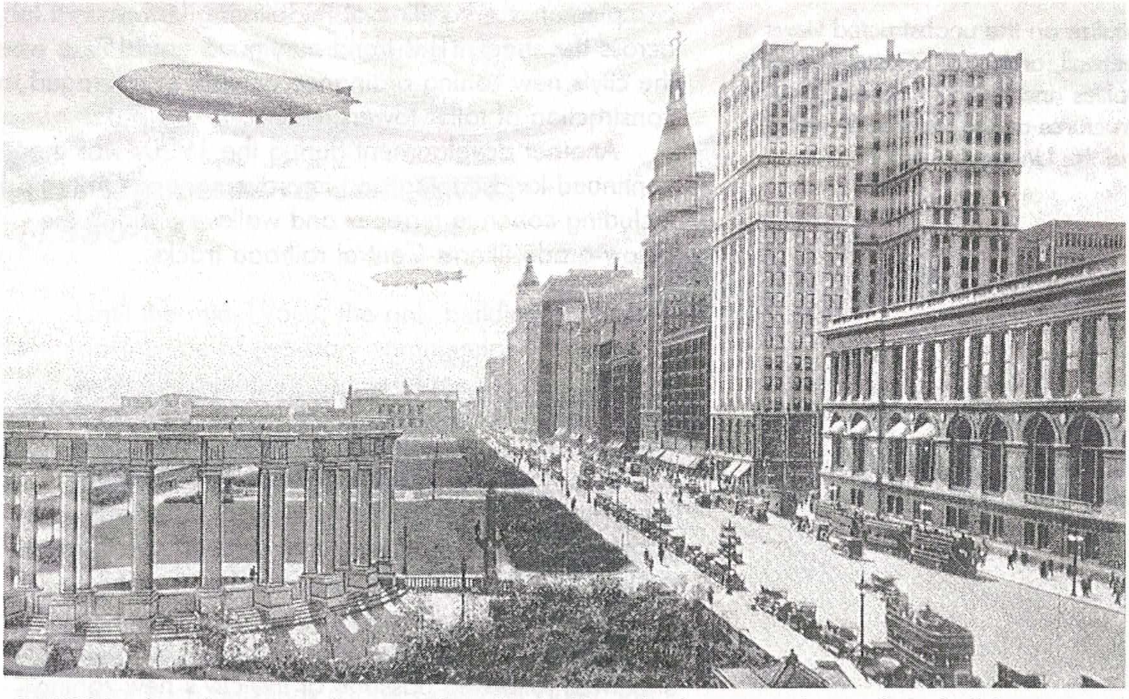
Improvements to Grant Park and Michigan Avenue attracted new development to the southern end of the streetwall. This 1911 photo, looking north, shows the Graphic Arts Building (1904; 1006 S.) at left and the Blackstone (1908; 636 S.), right center.

S.), the Harvester Building (1907; 600 S.), the McCormick Building (1908-12; 332 S.), People's Gas (1910-11; 122 S.), the Karpen Building (1911; 910 S.), the Crane Company Building (1912; 836 S.); and the Arcade Building (1913).

Also constructed during this period were several smaller buildings, including the American Radiator Company (1903; 816 S.; remodeled 1957) and the Graphic Arts Building (1904; 1006 S.). The latter was an extension of the printing house district that was developing immediately to the west.

An ongoing controversy within the heart of the Loop about new skyscrapers also affected the height of buildings along Michigan Avenue. In 1902, the City Council had raised building height limits from 130 to 260 feet. When construction immediately soared to new heights, concerned citizens complained that the new buildings were cutting off light and air to the street.

In response to the outcry, the council in 1911 lowered the height limit throughout the downtown to 200 feet, or about the height of a 22-story building. Since many of the buildings along the streetwall were



By 1924, when this postcard was made, taller buildings had come to the north end of the streetwall. This view, looking south, includes: the Grant Park peristyle (since demolished) at lower left; and, from right, the Public Library, the Michigan Boulevard Building (30 N.), and the tower of the Montgomery Ward (6 N.) Building.

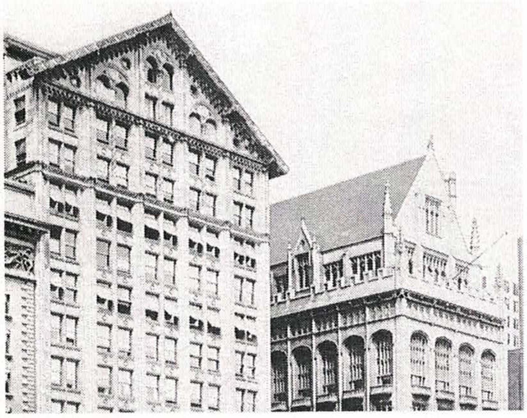
built around this time, it was this and subsequent regulations that determined its general height uniformity.

Michigan Avenue also continued to attract cultural institutions, with new buildings for the Illinois Athletic and University clubs (1908), the Sherwood Conservatory of Music (1912; 1014 S.), and the Chicago Symphony. The latter's facility, Orchestra Hall, was completed in 1905; in keeping with the speculative times it also included several floors of office space.

The architecture of this period took full advantage of the visibility of the streetwall. Unlike buildings being built elsewhere in the Loop, where it was difficult to view the full height of a building from the street, these buildings were very prominent. As a result, they were often heavily decorated with statuary, balconies, medallions, and ornamented window trim. The styles tended toward the picturesque, such as English Tudor, French Second Empire and Venetian Gothic.

In particular, the visibility allowed the architects to use the tops of the buildings as an identifying feature. They designed gabled roofs and towers to add interest to the silhouette of the streetwall. The Monroe Building for instance, was designed with a gabled roof to complement the roofline of the existing University Club, across the street. This trend continued until 1923, when the city's new zoning ordinance actually encouraged the construction of taller towers.

Another development during the 1920s was the continued landscaping and improvement of Grant Park, including concrete terraces and walkways along the below-grade Illinois Central railroad tracks.



To capitalize on the unobstructed views of the streetwall, architects created distinctive roof profiles and lavish ornamentation on such structures as the Monroe Building (left) and the University Club.

Setbacks with Towers (1923-30)

The streetwall's current silhouette was mostly completed during the 1920s, a decade that saw the construction of four major buildings: two office towers, a club, and the world's largest hotel at the time.

The Straus Building (1924; 310 S.) was the first structure to be built along the Michigan Avenue streetwall following passage of the city's new zoning ordinance. The 1923 law had maintained the maximum building height at 200 feet, but permitted taller towers if they were set back from the building mass.

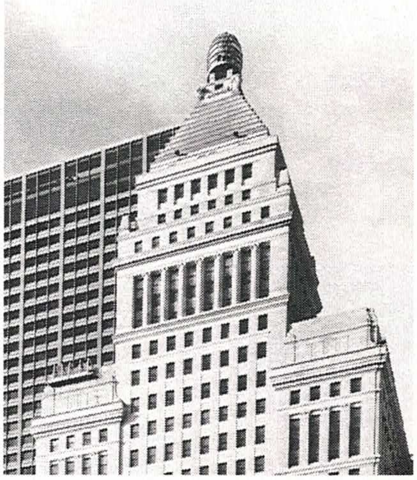
The Straus' cornice line was built at the same height as its neighbor, the Railway Exchange, but the architects added a nine-story tower to accommodate additional offices. Four years later, another office building, the Willoughby (1928; 8 S.), was built with a narrow, setback tower that reached 36 floors.

The Karpen furniture company sold its building at 910 S. Michigan to Standard Oil, which added seven stories in 1926. In height and function, the expanded structure was congruent with other major commercial buildings to the north.

In 1927, the Stevens Hotel (720 S.), the last of the great Michigan Avenue hotels was constructed. Although several other substantial buildings are located south of the Stevens (now the Hilton Hotel and Towers), the *continuous* character of a streetwall essentially ends with the hotel's series of four 25-story towers.

Unfortunately, the promise that these buildings suggested for the southern end of Michigan Avenue was never fulfilled. The Great Depression, probably more than any other factor, prevented the southern part of the street from being built out.

The Chicago Club, constructed in 1930 on the site of the old Art Institute building, was the last structure to be built along the streetwall during this period.



The city's 1923 zoning ordinance encouraged buildings with setback towers, such as the Straus Building.

The Depression and WWII (1930-55)

Until the mid-1950s, the only building activity was the construction of two-story commercial "taxpayer" buildings, filling stations, and surface parking lots. These occurred along the southern end of the streetwall, as the remaining pre-Fire mansions were demolished.

Alterations to the buildings during this period were minimal, the greatest being storefront modernizations and the removal in 1947 of the decayed landmark tower from the Montgomery Ward Building.

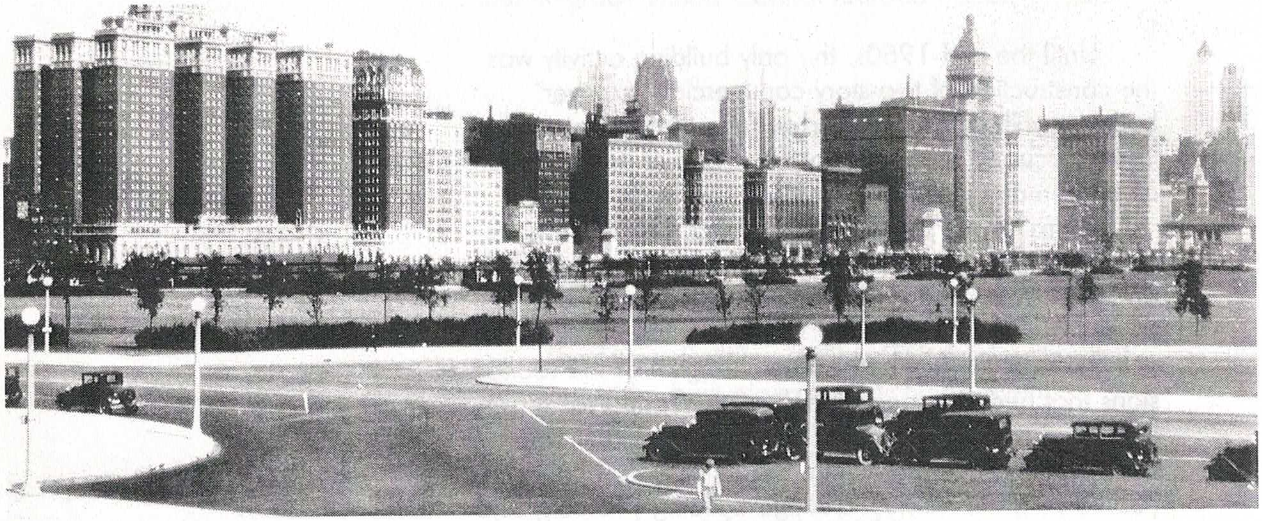
Perhaps the first noticeable change was the rooftop signs that began appearing following World War II on the top of such buildings as the Congress Hotel, the Michigan Boulevard Building, the Railway Exchange ("Santa Fe"), the Musical College Building ("Torco"), and Montgomery Ward ("Almer Coe Optical").

It should be noted that none of these--or other--rooftop signs were erected during the proposed district's period of significance (1880-1930).

However, there has always been rooftop lighting that has contributed to the identity and presence of the streetwall at night. In each case, the lighting schemes were created as part of the original design of the buildings. One of the earliest examples was the floodlighting that accented the trademark spire of the Montgomery Ward tower. The roof of the Blackstone Hotel was lined with ornamental globe light standards, and the stepped lantern of the Straus Building was bathed in colored light and its ornamental glass beehive included a flashing beacon.

One of the biggest changes to the street itself came with the construction of the Grant Park underground garage in the 1950s. The street's ornamental light fixtures were replaced; the "peristyle" and landscaping at the northern end of Grant Park were removed or altered; pedestrian entrance canopies (of an incongruous, modern design) were built on the sidewalks; and vehicular garage entrances were cut into the medians and curb lanes. As a result, the section of Grant Park south of Jackson Street--and along Michigan Avenue--is more intact today than the section north of Monroe Street.

As with the rest of the country, when Chicago once again turned to urban development after the Depression



A 1933 view looking northwest from the Field Museum. The Stevens (now Hilton) Hotel is at left; the Willoughby Tower is at far right.

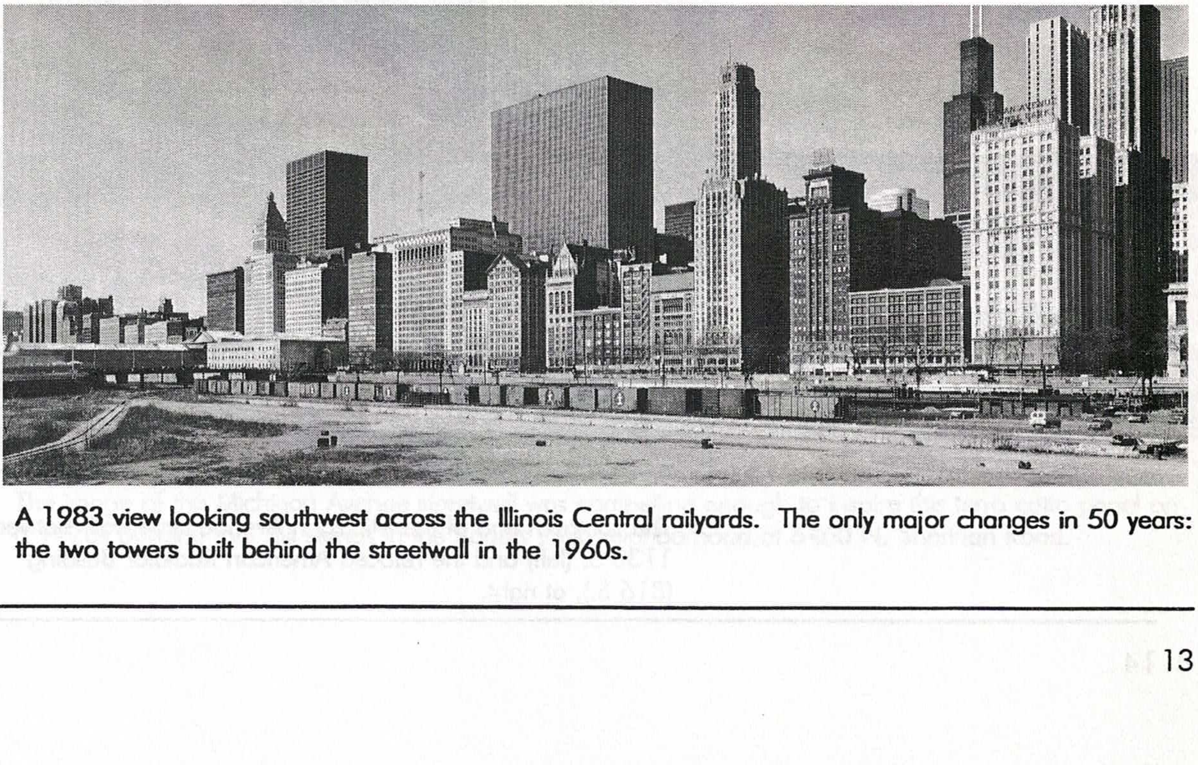
and World War II, there were new development visions, new building and transportation technologies, and new approaches. The Michigan Avenue streetwall was not an active part of those agendas, as the little development that did occur between World War II and the mid-1950s took place elsewhere.

The Modern Era (1955-present)

Ironically, since the 1950s there has been more new construction along the southern stretch of the avenue than there has been to the north. Developers of motels focused on the location, taking advantage of its lower land values, its proximity to Lake Shore Drive, and the ease of automobile access to the fringes of the central business area.

The only major structure built during this period was the Borg Warner Building (1958; 200 S. Michigan), which replaced the 74-year-old Pullman Building, one of the streetwall's pioneer highrises. Although the new building conformed to the height of the streetwall, it violated most of the wall's architectural vocabulary.

Several other buildings were remodeled for corporate clients, thus reaffirming the streetwall's identity as a high-profile location. These included refacings of



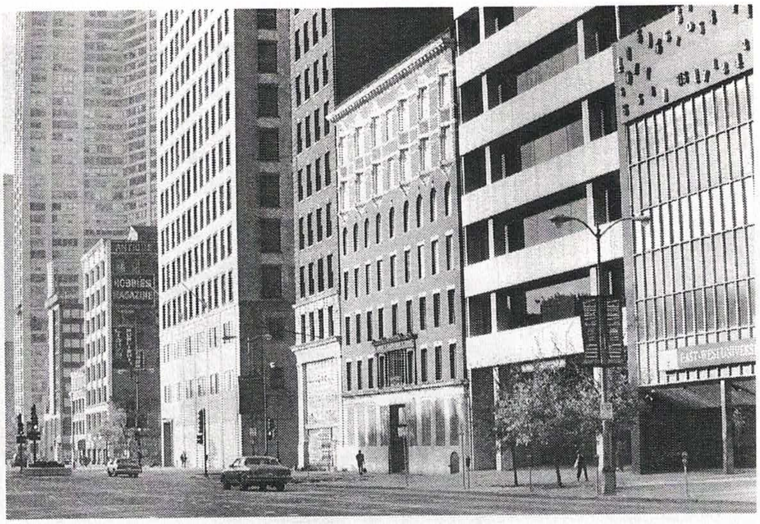
A 1983 view looking southwest across the Illinois Central railyards. The only major changes in 50 years: the two towers built behind the streetwall in the 1960s.

the American Radiator Building (816 S.) in 1957 for the Underwood typewriter company (later Olivetti) and of the Arcade-Petroleum Building (618 S.) for IBM in 1958.

The construction of the Johnson Publishing Company Building (820 S.) in 1969 continued to reinforce this trend, although a major corporate presence left in 1974 when Standard Oil moved from 910 S. Michigan to its new 82-story Amoco Building in Illinois Center.

Another significant change during the 1960s was the construction of the 43-story apartment building at 1130 S. Michigan. While this and other modern buildings vary in their design quality, their materials and style generally are inconsistent with the prevailing masonry-clad, vertically expressed architecture of the pre-1930 buildings. In the case of the apartment building, its height, site plan, and materials are dramatically at odds with the rest of the streetwall.

The construction during the 1960s of the two office towers immediately behind the streetwall on Wabash Avenue also had a negative impact on the character of the proposed historic district--or at least the perception of it from Grant Park and the lakefront. The glass curtain walls of the CNA Center and the Mid-Continental Plaza stand in vivid contrast to the lower



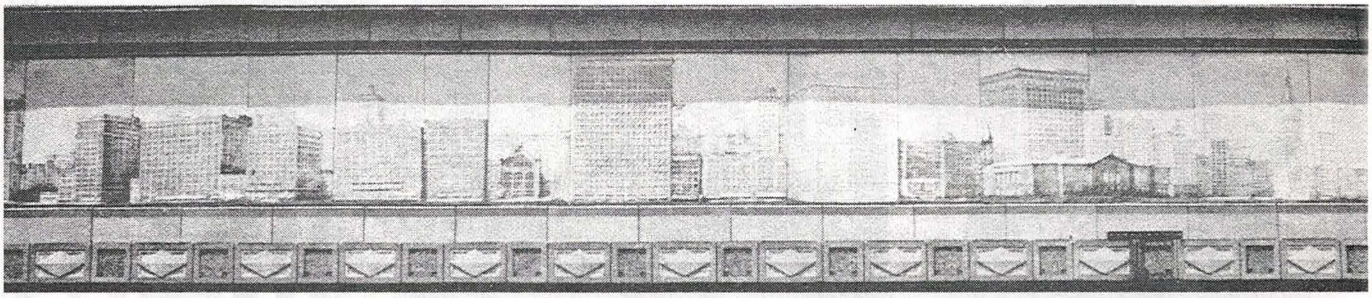
The southern end of the Michigan Avenue streetwall, between 1130 S. (left) and the refaced American Radiator Building (816 S.), at right.

scale and detailed masonry designs of the buildings fronting on Michigan Avenue. Equally imposing is the fact that the new buildings were laid out in a north-south orientation, which means that the bulk of the building walls are massed directly behind the streetwall. This is in contrast to other buildings in the Loop that have a strong east-west orientation such as First Chicago National Bank, whose tower is far less noticeable behind the streetwall.

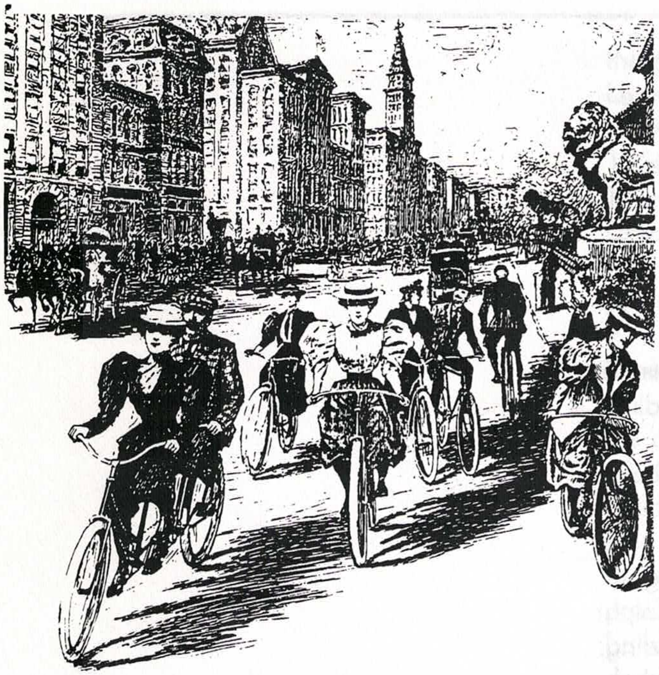
Michigan Avenue had to wait until 1984 for its next significant change, when the Stone Container Building was built at the northwest corner of Randolph and Michigan. The new triangular-topped tower replaced the Crerar Library Building. The Stone Container Building, which is not compatible in design and materials to the streetwall, turns the corner, relating more strongly to the modern buildings along Randolph: Doral Plaza, Prudential Plaza, and the Amoco Building.

In 1985, a six-story masonry structure was added to the top of the Illinois Athletic Club (112 S. Michigan). Otherwise, there have been few other significant changes to the streetwall itself.

Although the south end of the streetwall is less cohesive than the northern end, ongoing developments should improve its marketability. These include the extension of Roosevelt Road to a relocated Lake Shore Drive, the completion of Grant Park from 11th Street to Roosevelt Road, the development of the Central Station residential area south of Roosevelt, and the residential reuse of vacant railroad yards and manufacturing buildings to the west and south.



The image of the Michigan Avenue streetwall was compelling enough to inspire this terra cotta panel on a 1920s building that still stands in the Rogers Park neighborhood at 6460 N. Sheridan Road.



Michigan Avenue activities over time: bicyclists at the turn of the century in front of the Art Institute; a pedestrian in 1959 (right); and a Botero sculpture show in 1994.

Chapter Two

Catalog of Historic Structures

Every important Chicago architectural firm practicing from 1885 to 1930--when the character of the "streetwall" was established--is represented in the Historic Michigan Boulevard District.

Holabird & Roche, about whom architectural historian Robert Breugmann writes, "no firm left a greater mark on a large American city," designed seven of the buildings, including the Monroe Building, University Club, and the Congress and Stevens hotels.

Adler & Sullivan, considered one of the most important architectural partnerships in late-nineteenth century Chicago, designed the Auditorium Building. In addition, this section of Michigan Avenue includes an example of Louis Sullivan's work as a solo practitioner: 18 S. Michigan Ave., part of the Gage Group.

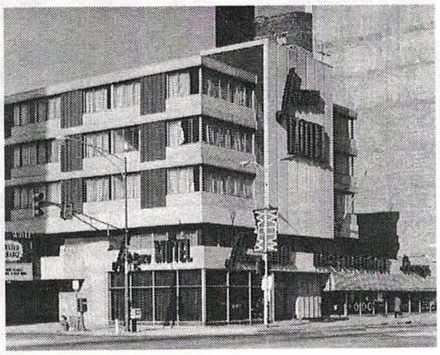
Benjamin Marshall, who with his partner Charles Fox would give the city some of its most luxurious apartment buildings and hotels, is well represented by the Blackstone Hotel and the Karpen-Standard Oil Building. Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White, known as Chicago's leader in the creation of corporate headquarters throughout the 1920s and 30s, designed the Straus Building.

Also along the streetwall are three products of D.H. Burnham and Company (Orchestra Hall and the Railway Exchange and Peoples Gas buildings), classically designed buildings that became the hallmark of Burnham's firm following the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

Other notable names represented by buildings along the streetwall include Henry Ives Cobb, Christian Albert Eckstorm, Jarvis Hunt, Richard Schmidt, Clinton J. Warren, and John Van Osdell II.

What follows is a description of the structures within the proposed Chicago Landmark district. The numbers before each building name correspond to the map at the beginning of this report.

A description of the structures within the proposed landmark district follows. The numbers listed before the name of each building correspond to the map at the beginning of this report.



The Avenue Motel, at the northwest corner of Roosevelt Road and Michigan Avenue, was built in 1957.

1. AVENUE MOTEL

1154 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1957
Architect: Benjamin H. Stein

Four stories high, with wide windows, straight lines, and a boxy shape, this motel is a handsome example of 1950s modernism. However, its design contrasts with the rest of the masonry buildings along the streetwall.

This is one of three auto-oriented hotels built along this section of Michigan Avenue following World War II. They offered travelers a lower-priced alternative to Loop hotels, similar to what the Bordeaux Hotel (at 1140 S.) provided for late-nineteenth century travelers.

The Chicago Manual Training School, a four-story structure built in 1884, originally stood on this site. It was demolished in the 1930s, and the site was later occupied by a parking lot and gas station.

2. BORDEAUX HOTEL

(Later known as the Park Avenue Hotel)

1140 S. Michigan Ave.

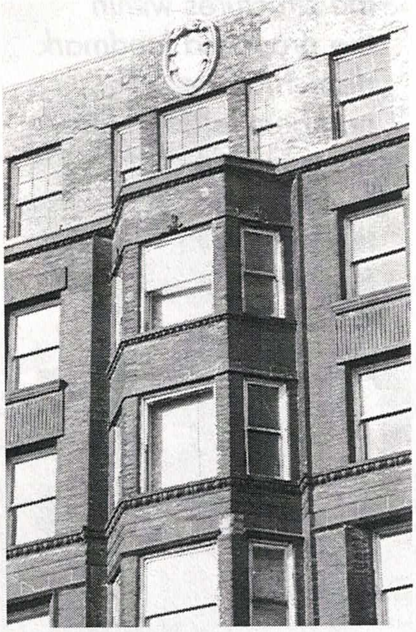
Date: 1891
Architect: Baumann & Cady

One of the oldest buildings along the streetwall, the former Bordeaux Hotel is a rare survivor of the multi-story "family hotels" that flourished here in the late-nineteenth century. These hotels appealed to those seeking quality lodging at reasonable rates.

The hotel was undoubtedly built to take advantage of the proximity of Central Station and in anticipation of guests attending the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. By the 1920s, the building housed a hotel of diminished repute.

Frederick Baumann was noted for his development of technologies for the construction of foundations in Chicago's compressible soils. His partner, Jeremiah Kiersted Cady, began his career with Burnham & Root.

The building originally was seven stories tall, with a simply detailed facade of brick and terra cotta. An eighth story was added by architects Tallmadge & Watson in 1916.



An eighth story was added to the Bordeaux Hotel in 1916.

3. 1130 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE BUILDING

1130 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1964
Architect: Loewenberg & Loewenberg

Constructed in 1964, this 43-story apartment complex is a reinforced concrete structure. Its developer, Ferd Kramer, head of Draper and Kramer, specialized in real estate residential development.

The architecture firm of Loewenberg & Loewenberg was founded in 1919 by Max and I.S. Loewenberg. During the 1920s, the firm designed several large apartment hotels and auto agencies. Following World War II, the partners received a commission for Chicago's first Urban Renewal project, the award-winning University Apartments in Hyde Park.

The building's massive scale and Y-shaped footprint varies significantly from the design characteristics of other Michigan Avenue buildings fronting Grant Park. Furthermore, its driveway and *porte cochere* also are at odds with the character of the street, which has virtually no other curb cuts.

4. ASCOT HOUSE AND HOTEL

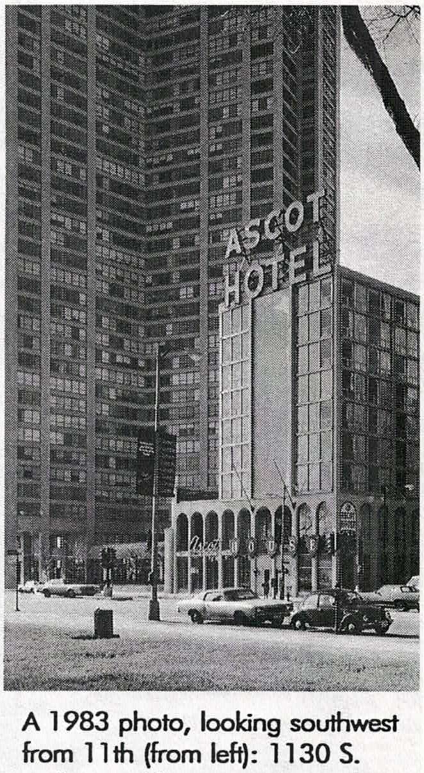
(Later the Grant Park Hotel)

1100 S. Michigan Ave.

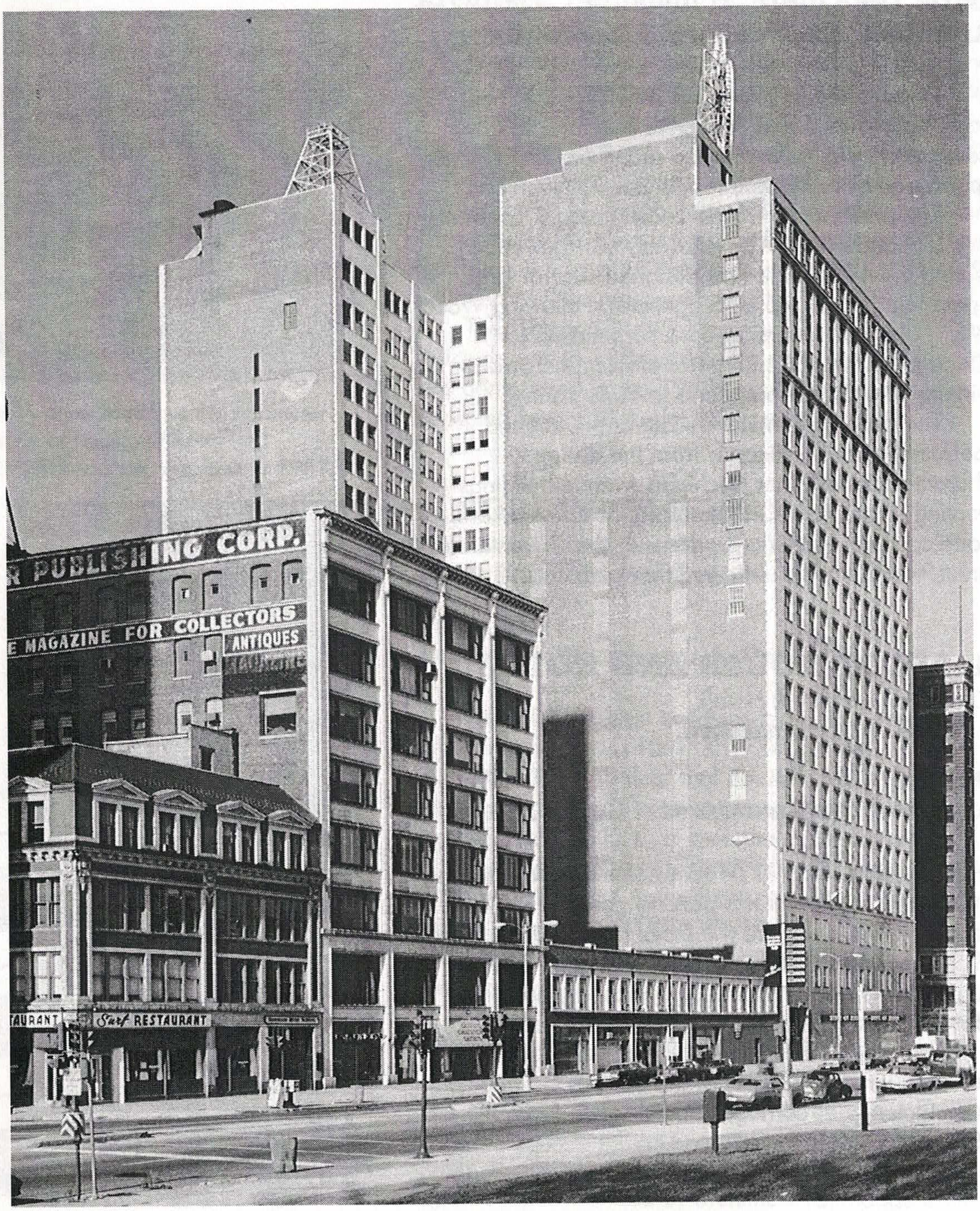
Date: 1960
Architect: A. Epstein and Sons, Inc.

This nine-story, 177-room hotel includes meeting rooms and a 125-vehicle parking garage. (A. Epstein and Sons also designed the Essex Inn at 800 S. Michigan.) The building's metal-and-glass exterior contrasts with the predominately masonry buildings along the rest of the Michigan Avenue streetwall.

Formerly on this site was the seven-story headquarters (built 1892) of the Kimball Company, manufacturers of carriages and sleighs. From the late 1920s to 1960, a surface parking lot occupied the site.



A 1983 photo, looking southwest from 11th (from left): 1130 S. and Ascot House.


PUBLISHING CORP.
MAGAZINE FOR COLLECTORS
ANTIQUES
RESTAURANT
Surf RESTAURANT

Michigan Avenue, between 11th and 9th (from left): Sherwood Conservatory of Music, Graphic Arts Building, 920 S. (since demolished), and Karpen-Standard Oil Building, as shown in this 1983 photo.

5. SHERWOOD CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

1014 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1912
Architect: Christian Albert Eckstorm

This four-story, red brick, and white-glazed terra cotta structure was built by developer Frederick Oliver as a speculative commercial building. During its first 30 years, it housed offices for a shingle distributor, lumber company, and electrical parts manufacturer. In 1941, the building was rehabilitated for the Sherwood Conservatory of Music, founded in 1895 by William H. Sherwood, a piano virtuoso, teacher, and composer.

Although relatively low in height, the building is complementary to the rest of the streetwall. Pedimented windows on the upper story distinguish both the east and south facades of this prominent corner building.

The architect, C.A. Eckstorm, began his career in the Chicago office of Henry Ives Cobb, where he supervised construction of the Newberry Library (60 W. Walton). When Cobb moved to New York in 1902, Eckstorm opened his own office. According to Henry Ericsson, a major figure in the construction industry at that time, Eckstorm became "undoubtedly the ablest warehouse architect in the city."

Among Eckstorm's better-known designs are: the Pugh Terminal (North Pier), the Fairbanks-Morse Building (900 S. Wabash), the Munn Building (815 S. Wabash), the Hunter Building (337 W. Madison; demolished), and two other structures in the proposed Historic Michigan Boulevard District: the Musical College (624 S.) and Harvester buildings (600 S.)

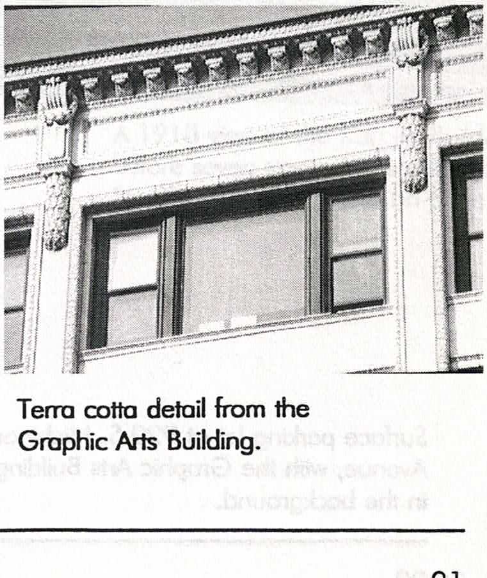
6. GRAPHIC ARTS BUILDING

(Later known as the Lightner Building)

1006 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1904
Architect: Edmund R. Krause

The Graphic Arts Building was a speculative venture intended for rental to printing-related businesses. Its Michigan Avenue location was a



Terra cotta detail from the Graphic Arts Building.

logical extension of Chicago's extensive printing industry, which was concentrated immediately to the west. Unlimited natural light afforded by the adjacent open expanses of Grant Park made the Michigan Avenue site ideal for the exacting work involved in the printing and engraving trades.

Like the Gage Group (at 18-30 S.), the Karpen Building (318 S.), and other commercial loft buildings erected on Michigan Avenue during this period, the facade of the Graphic Arts Building combined quality materials and detailing with the functional necessity of large, light-giving windows. The supporting steel frame was minimally clad with a skin of white glazed terra cotta, detailed with projecting piers, recessed spandrels, and wide "Chicago windows."

Designed by German-born and educated Edmund R. Krause, the building is one of the architect's few ventures in a style commonly known as the Chicago School. It shows the influence of such Holabird & Roche buildings as the McClurg, Champlain, and Marquette, which were seminal in defining the Chicago School. (A more characteristic example of Krause's work is the eclectically-detailed facade of the Majestic Building, erected one year later at 16-22 W. Monroe.)

Following World War II, the Graphic Arts Building housed the Lightner Publishing Company, which was nationally known for its magazines for antique collectors and hobbyists. Its founder, Otto C. Lightner, was regarded as "The Hobby King of America."

7. 920 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

This vacant parcel was formerly occupied by a two-story brick building, designed by Edmund R. Krause in 1911. It was torn down in 1992, and replaced by a surface parking lot.

Surface parking lot at 920 S. Michigan Avenue, with the Graphic Arts Building in the background.

8. KARPEN-STANDARD OIL BUILDING

910 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1911
Architect: Marshall and Fox

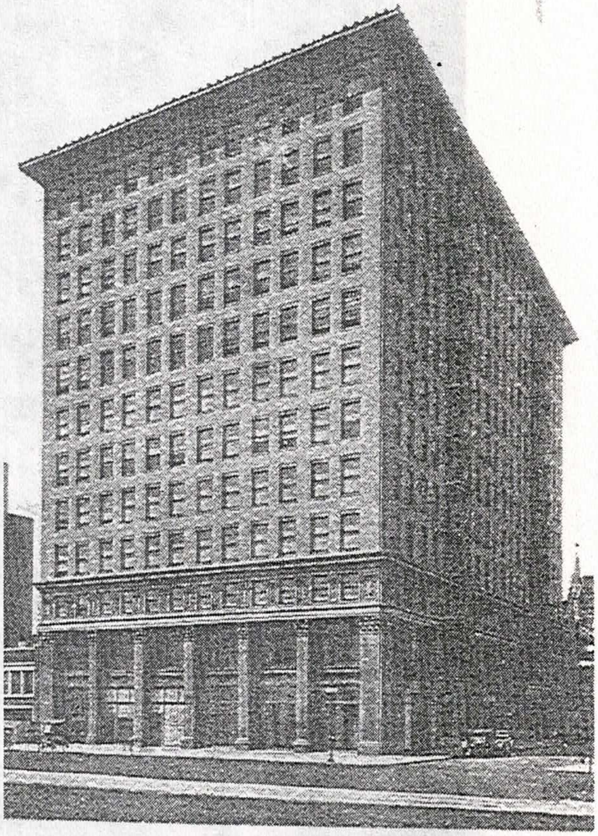
Date of Addition: 1927
Architect: Graham, Anderson,
Probst & White

S. Karpen and Brothers, at one time, was one of the nation's largest manufacturers of upholstered furniture. Founded in 1880 by Solomon Karpen, an immigrant of Polish-German extraction, the firm included eight of his brothers. The Karpen name, according to *History of the Jews in Chicago* (1924), was "as well known in the furniture industry as that of Armour and Swift in the [meat] packing industry."

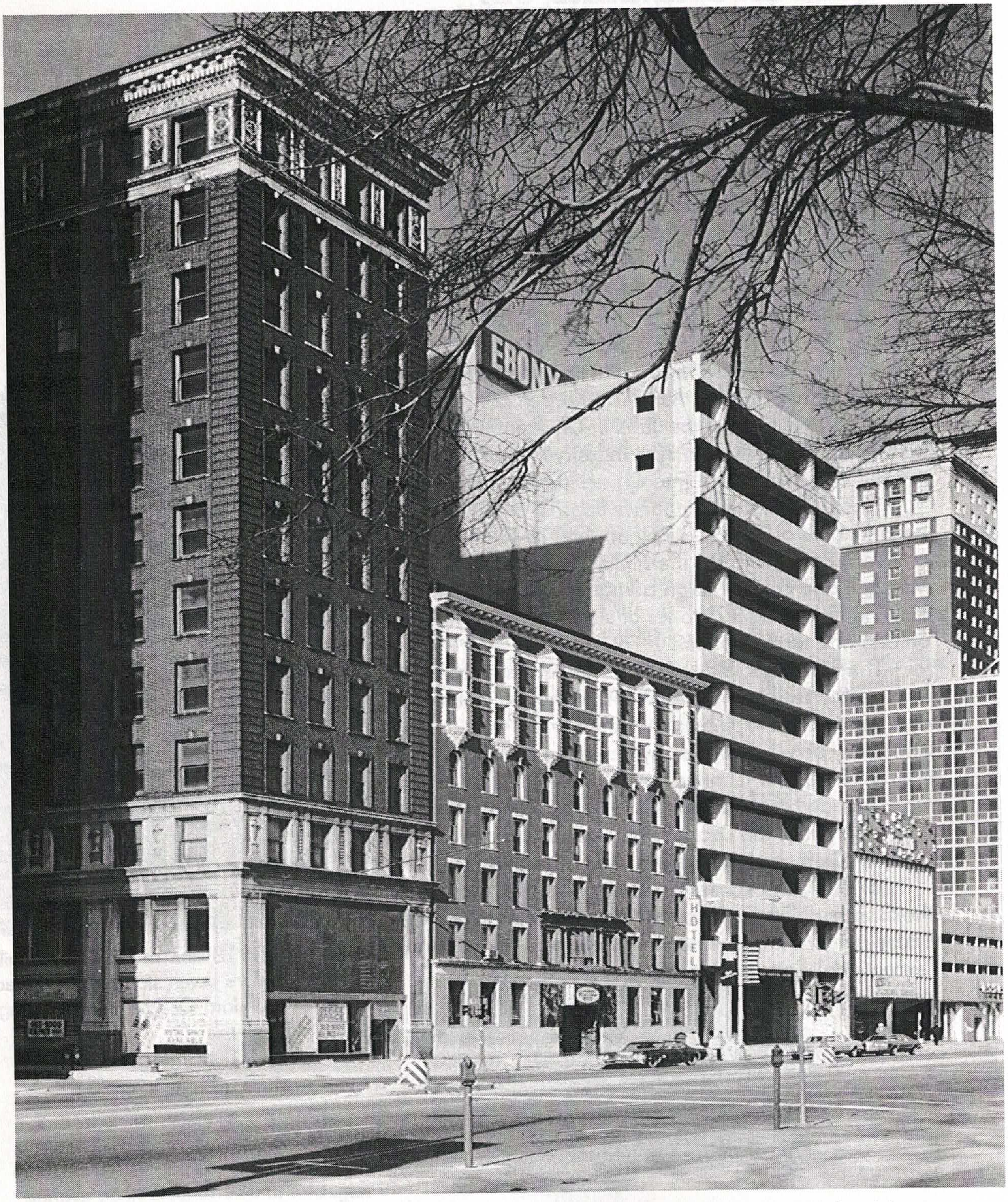
Since 1899, the company's flagship store had been located at 318 S. Michigan Ave. In 1911, the company commissioned the architecture firm of Marshall and Fox to design a larger facility. The new building contained 12 stories of showrooms, company offices, and tenant spaces.

The building's fairly simple ornament is in contrast to the often exuberant facades of the hotels, theaters, and apartment buildings for which the firm was principally noted. Founded by Benjamin Marshall (1874-1944) and Charles Fox (1870-1926), the firm's work included the Blackstone Hotel and Theater (636 S. Michigan Ave.), the Drake Hotel, the South Shore Country Club, and the Uptown Bank Building.

In 1927, the Karpen Building was taken over by the Standard Oil Company which added seven stories. These modern improvements made the building "exceptionally attractive and desirable for office use," according to an office building directory of the time.



A 1918 view of the Karpen Building, before seven stories were added for Standard Oil (see photo on page 20).



The block between 9th and 8th includes (from left): the Crane Company Building, the YWCA, Johnson Publishing, East-West University, and the Essex Inn.

9. CRANE COMPANY BUILDING

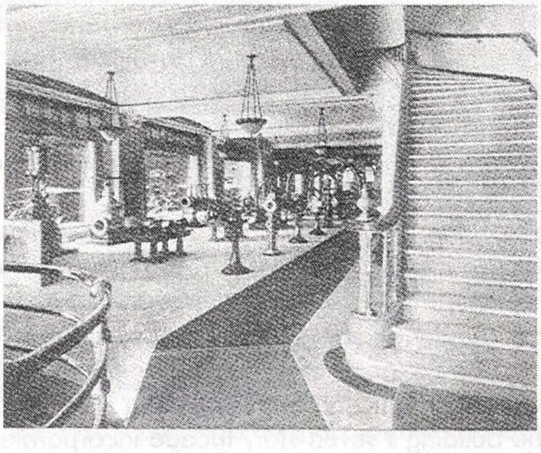
836 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1912-13
Architect: Holabird & Roche

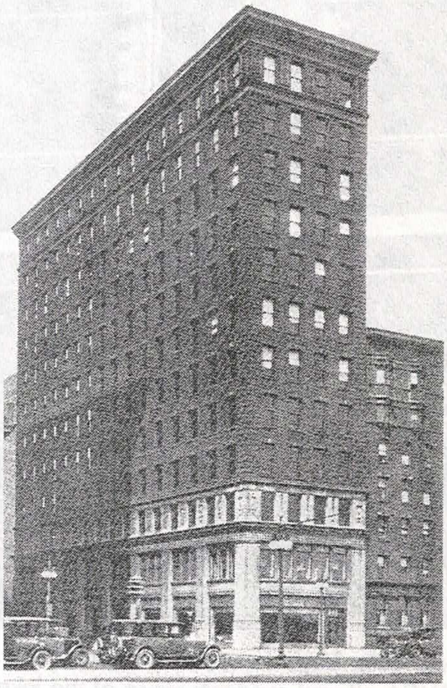
The Crane Building was designed to house the general headquarters and sales showroom of the Crane Company, a well-known manufacturer of plumbing goods. Crane was a giant of the industry and put out its own magazine, *Valve World*.

The building's first two stories were planned as sales showrooms where architects and building contractors could examine samples of the Crane Company's products. To put their products in the proper context, the company constructed completely furnished bathrooms, kitchens, and utility rooms, which were periodically changed to reflect changing tastes and product designs. Upper stories were planned to house the company's general offices.

Sited immediately south of the seven-story YWCA, the 12-story, 40-foot wide Crane Building has a distinctive slab-like presence on South Michigan Avenue. The facade reflects an almost residential character, with its classically detailed skin of limestone, warm reddish-brown tapestry brick, and terra cotta trim. Still extant on the 9th Street portal is "The Crane Co.," incised in stone.



A 1929 view of a Crane Company showroom.



A 1925 photo of the Crane Building.

Designed by Holabird & Roche, the facade reflects the stylistic changes in the firm's work, when compared to its other Michigan Avenue buildings: the Congress Hotel (520 S.), the Gage Group (24-30 S.), the University Club (at Monroe Street), the Monroe Building (104 S.), and the Stevens Hotel (720 S).

Holabird & Roche, by far, was the most prolific of Chicago's early twentieth-century architecture firms. Among its other well-known buildings are the: Champlain (37 S. Wabash), Chicago (7 W. Madison), City Hall (120 N. LaSalle), Marquette (140 S. Dearborn), Old Colony (407 S. Dearborn), Oliver (159 N. Dearborn), and Soldier Field.

10. YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

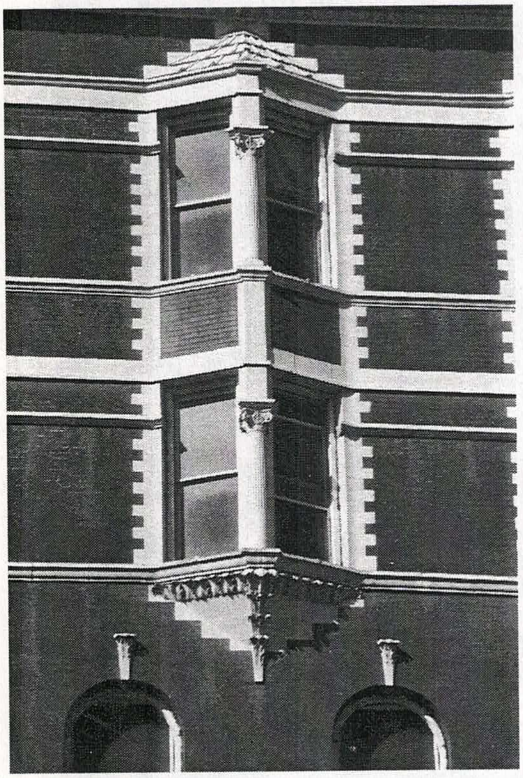
830 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1894-95
Architect: John Van Osdel II

The same lakefront amenities that attracted fine hotels to South Michigan Avenue in the late-nineteenth century made the street the ideal location for the Chicago branch of the Young Woman's Christian Association. A national organization initially founded for the spiritual enlightenment of young women, the YWCA was best known for its establishment of residential hotels that provided safe, low-cost lodging--"open to all religions"--for travelers and self-supporting working women in cities across the country.

The close proximity of the site to the Central and Dearborn railroad stations and the location adjacent to, yet separated from, the congestion of downtown Chicago made it an ideal spot for the YWCA'S varied functions. (Prior to the completion of the existing building, the YWCA had occupied the former mansion of John B. Drake, on the same site.)

Entirely of fireproof construction, the building was designed as a self-contained living environment for its residents, complete with shops, dining quarters, gymnasium, laundry and a wide range of social programs. It was designed by John M. Van Osdel II, the nephew of pioneer Chicago architect, John Mills Van Osdel. The building's seven-story facade incorporated



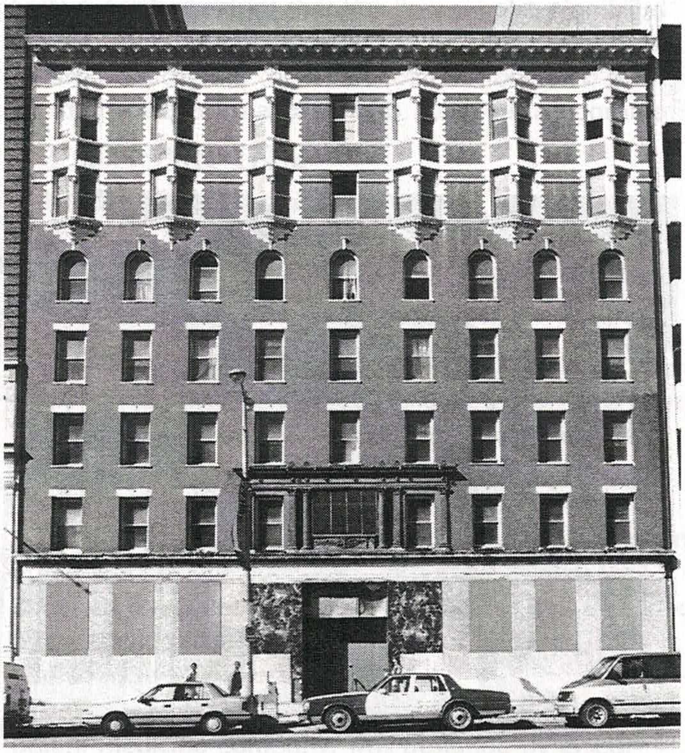
Triangular bays on upper floors of the YWCA offered residents views of the lake and both directions on Michigan Avenue.

the same degree of quality of design and detail as Michigan Avenue's finest hotels, giving no visible indication of its charitable, not-for-profit identity.

Faced with pressed brick, stone and terra cotta, the facade is an eclectic mix of Italianate and Flemish-derived details. Windows for the first floor lobbies and parlors were elevated above sidewalk level to ensure privacy and security from the street. The second floor incorporated an open-air loggia from which residents could enjoy vistas of the lake.

Reminiscent of Italianate residential buildings of the 1870s, the windows of the intermediate floors are widely spaced, with pronounced lintels and keystones. The projecting, triangular, terra cotta-clad bays of the top two stories visually terminate the facade, while offering residents views up and down Michigan Avenue and of the lakefront.

With the completion of the Harriet Hammond McCormick YWCA at 1001 N. Dearborn St. in 1929, the former Michigan Avenue YWCA was sold and converted to a private hotel. Over the next 50 years, it operated under a variety of names; it is now vacant.



The YWCA building's original rusticated stone base was covered by smooth stone panels sometime in the 1960s.

11. JOHNSON PUBLISHING CO.

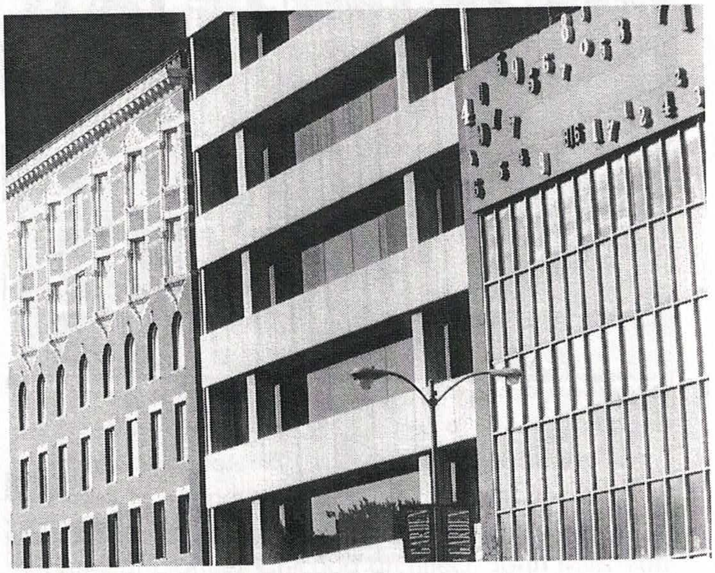
820 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1969
Architect: Dubin, Dubin, Black & Moutoussamy

This 11-story, marble-and-glass structure was designed by John Moutoussamy as the corporate headquarters for Johnson Publishing, the world's largest African-American owned publishing company.

John H. Johnson founded his company in 1942 with a $500 loan secured by his mother's furniture. Today, with company revenues well over $200 million, this business empire includes *Ebony, Jet,* and *EM* magazines and also encompasses radio, television, travel, and the world's largest traveling fashion show.

Although 40 years removed from the proposed district's period of architectural development, Johnson Publishing does have features similar to other skyscrapers along the streetwall, such as its height and its relatively flat facade. However, the relationship of the building's exterior wall surfaces to its windows is strongly horizontal, while other buildings on Michigan Avenue have a vertical orientation. Also, the ground floor entrance is recessed, and there is a driveway curb cut.



The upper facades of (from left) the YWCA, Johnson Publishing Co., and American Radiator (now East-West University).

12. AMERICAN RADIATOR BUILDING

(Later known as the American Standard Building, the Olivetti Building, and East-West University)

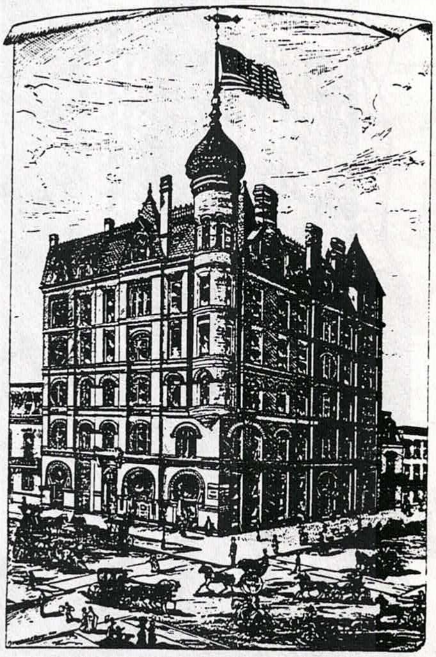
816 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1903
Architect: Unknown

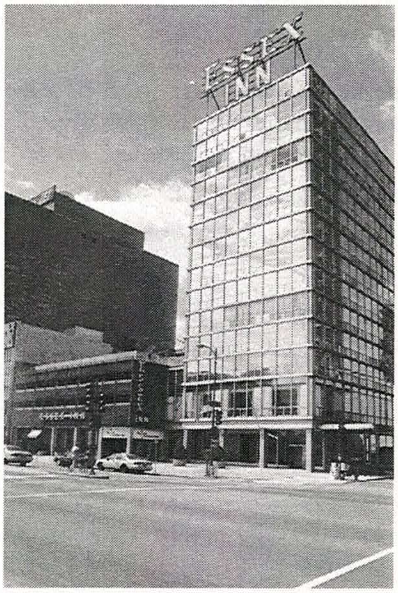
Date of remodellings: 1957; 1966
Architects: Fridstein and Fitch; Seymour Goldberg

The four-story, brick American Radiator Building was substantially remodelled in 1957, when a new front was constructed for the Underwood Typewriter Company. The distinctive "Olivetti typeface" sign, which occupies the building's upper story, was added in 1966 when Olivetti Typewriter moved in.

Since 1980, the building has housed East-West University. Its current educational function is in keeping with the use of other buildings. However, its glass-and-metal curtain wall and its recessed ground level are incompatible with the prevailing characteristics of the district.



The Bucklen Building (above) formerly occupied the site of the Essex Inn (below).



13. ESSEX INN

800 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1961
Architect: A. Epstein and Sons, Inc.

This 14-story, 325-room hotel is a fine example of 1960s modernism. Although its stainless steel-and-glass cladding and building setback are at odds with the prevailing characteristics of the streetwall, it is a high-quality design of the period.

This can best be seen in the design of its lobby and in the "Pop" multicolored brickwork that accents the attached three-story garage. The building was designed by the same firm which did the Ascot Hotel at 1100 S. Michigan Ave.

The six-story Bucklen Building, headquarters of a patent medicine company, was designed by Oscar Cobb and occupied this site from 1884 to 1933.

The Stevens Hotel building occupies an entire block facing Michigan Avenue and Grant Park.

14. STEVENS HOTEL

(Now the Chicago Hilton and Towers)

720 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1925-27

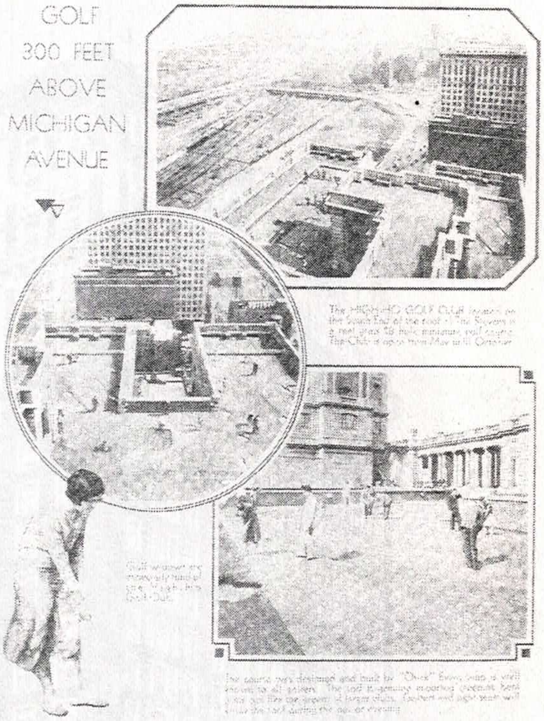
Architect: Holabird & Roche

Originally named for its builder, James W. Stevens (1853-1936), president of a retail, insurance, and hotel company, the Stevens Hotel is the last of the great Michigan Avenue hotels. When it was completed in 1927, its 3,000 guest rooms, 4,000-seat banquet hall, and 35,000-square-foot exhibition area made it the world's largest--and the city's chief convention--hotel.

The 25-story building is sheathed at the base and top in rusticated limestone, in a modified Louis XVI style, and in the intermediate stories with dark red brick. The architects, Holabird & Roche, divided the massive structure into four towers and scaled the windows, entranceways, and decorative details to further break down the immense size of the building.

The project was so large that Holabird & Roche had 60 draftsman working on it. The engineering problem of the large public spaces on the ground floor was so difficult that its solution was published in *Engineering News Record*. An *Economist* article at the time reported that the construction contract was the largest ever for a single structure.

The Stevens Hotel opened to laudatory reviews. A 1927 issue of *Hotel Monthly* devoted 55 pages to the hotel. Especially memorable was the Grand Stair Hall of the lobby. On the stairways were bronze fountains, designed by noted Chicago sculptor Frederick Cleveland Hibbard (1881-1950). Crowning the vast space was a carved plaster ceiling trimmed in gold and centered with a painting of clouds by W.P. Nelson.



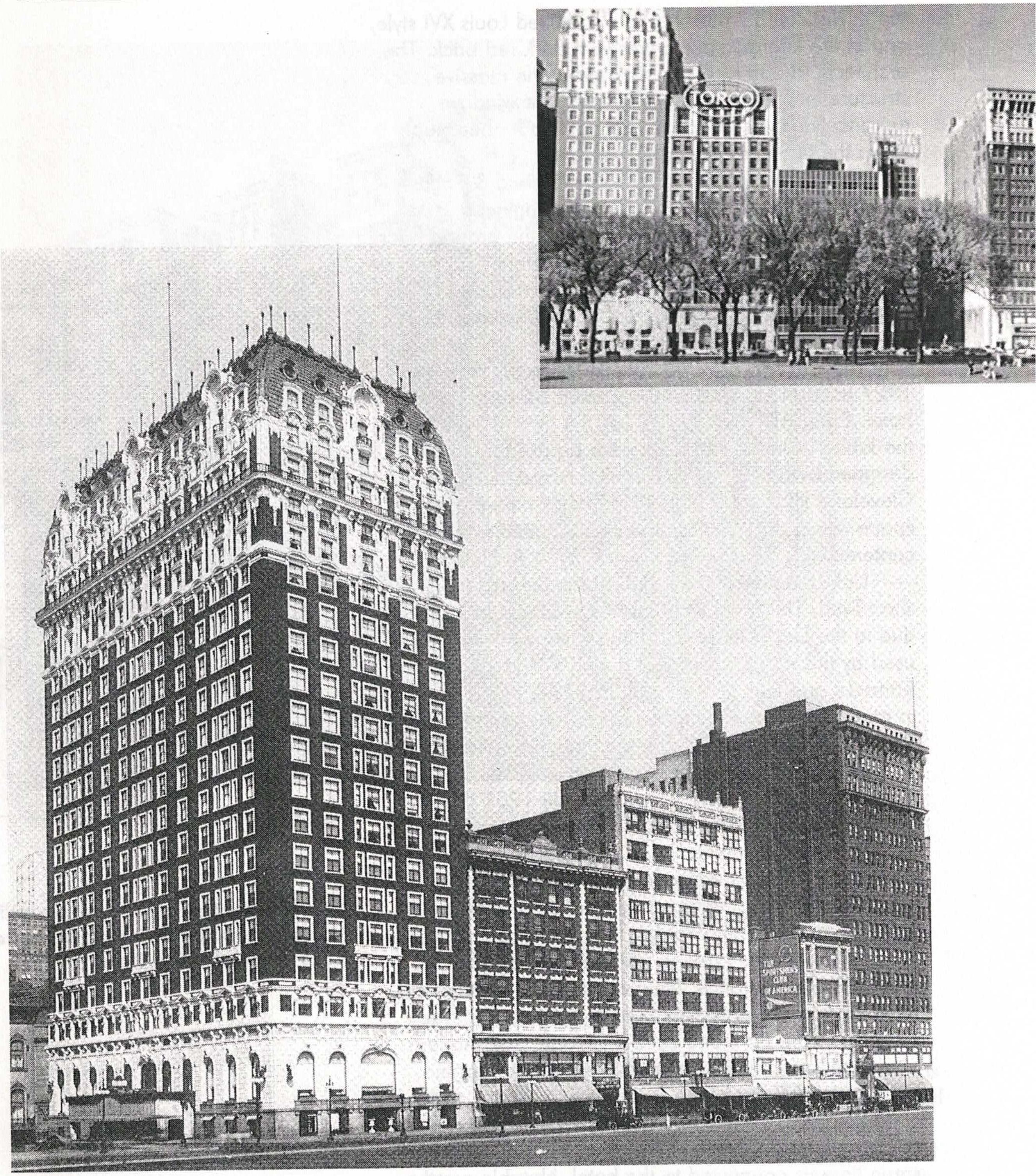
An 18-hole, "real grass" miniature golf course originally was located on the roof of the Stevens/Hilton Hotel.

Unfortunately, the triumph of the Stevens Hotel was short lived. The hotel went into receivership in 1932, due to the Depression, and hit its low point when it was used by the War Department during World War II as a barracks and technical school. In 1944, it was revived in preparation for simultaneously hosting both the Democratic and Republican national conventions.

Although the Stevens Hotel was acquired by Conrad Hilton in 1945, it was not until 1951 that the name was changed to reflect the new ownership. In the 1980s, Hilton committed to a $180 million renovation, designed by Solomon Cordwell Buenz and Hirsch/Bedner, that retained the grandeur of such features as the original lobby and great ballroom, while constructing a new parking garage, health club, and new vehicular entrance. New suites were constructed atop the two center towers to take advantage of the views of Grant Park and Lake Michigan. The modern construction materials distinguish the suites from the masonry of the rest of the facade.

A 12-story service building facing Wabash Avenue (723 S.), also designed by Holabird & Roche at the same time, is connected to the hotel. Notable are the carved crowned heads atop the building's arched driveway openings.

Balbo to Harrison


TORCO
THE SPORTSMEN'S CLUB OF AMERICA

A c.1920 photograph (above) of the block of Michigan Avenue between Balbo and Harrison streets. From left to right: the Blackstone Hotel, the Musical College Building (before its 1922 addition), the Arcade Building (before its 1958 refacing), 608-14 S. (since demolished), and the Harvester Building. Top right: the block today.

15. BLACKSTONE HOTEL
636 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1908
Architect: Marshall and Fox

The Blackstone Hotel was built in 1908 by brothers Tracy C. (1864-1939) and John B. Drake (1872-1964), whose family name had long been synonymous in Chicago with fine hotel hospitality. The hotel was named after Timothy Blackstone, a family friend and president of the Chicago and Alton Railroad, whose home had once stood on the site.

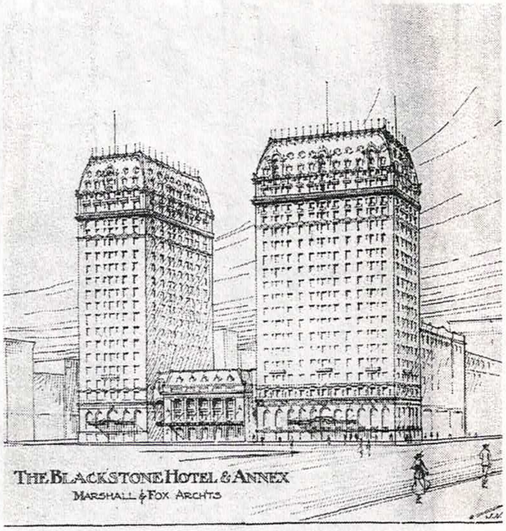
The architecture firm of Marshall and Fox was famed during the first three decades of the twentieth century for grand theater, hotel, and apartment designs (see description for 910 S. Michigan Ave.). The architects' preference for extravagant style and decoration was just what the Drake brothers wanted in order to carry on the grand hotel tradition inherited from their father. "In reaching beyond colonial and Federal America and Adamesque England," historian C. William Westfall has since noted, "the Blackstone was bringing to Chicago's social elite the broader, cosmopolitan world they now visited and wished to have at home as well."

On the exterior, the 22-story Blackstone Hotel is opulent French Second Empire in style, with red brick and white, glazed terra cotta details and heavily moulded ornament. On the interior, the decor was elegant English Edwardian, from the soft pearl gray-colored restaurant to the white-and-gold ballroom. The Blackstone's plan won a gold medal from the Illinois Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1909.

Over time, the Blackstone became the preferred lodging for several American presidents including Warren Harding, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, and Richard Nixon.

Immediately west of the hotel, at 60 E. Balbo St., is the five-story Blackstone Theater, also designed by Marshall and Fox, and built a year after the hotel. A second hotel tower was planned, but never executed, west of the theater building.

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.



A second tower was proposed, but never built, to the west of the Blackstone Theater along Balbo.

16. MUSICAL COLLEGE BUILDING

(Later known as the Grant Park Building and the Blum Building; now Columbia College)

624 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1908
Architect: Christian Albert Eckstorm

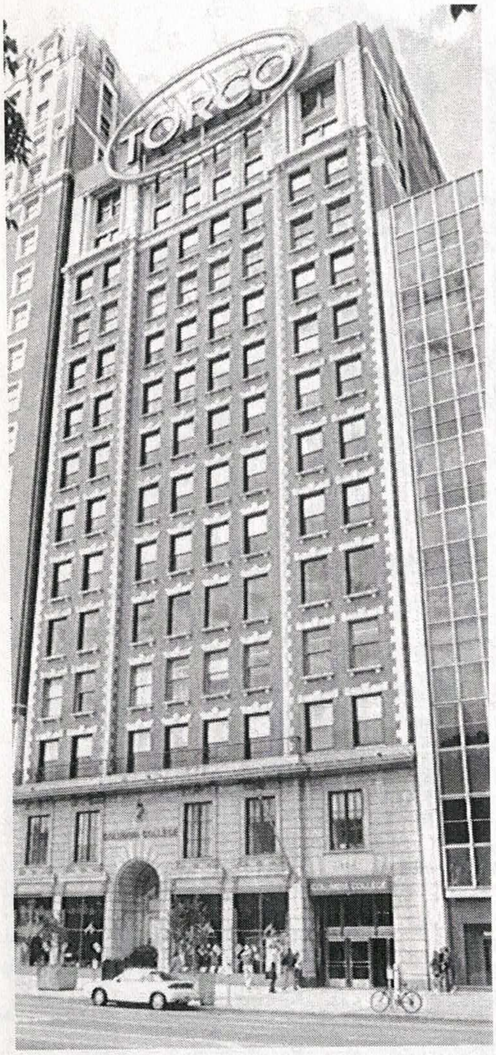
Date of Addition: 1922
Architect: Alfred S. Alschuler

As its many names suggest, this building has had numerous owners over the years. It was designed in 1908 as an eight-story building for the Chicago Musical College, one of the city's preeminent musical institutions, which was headed by Florenz Ziegfeld, Sr., father of Broadway Follies producer Flo Ziegfeld.

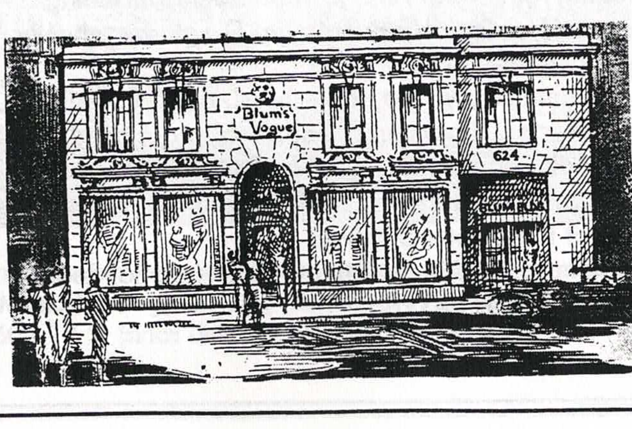
The building's architect, C. A. Eckstorm, also designed the Harvester Building (at 600 S.) and the Sherwood Conservatory of Music (see description for 1014 S. Michigan). Originally, the facade featured small, ornamental-iron balconies, and the storefronts on the first two floors were slightly recessed between massive columns (see photo on page 32; second building from the left).

In 1922, seven stories were added to the building, including a new decorative top. At that time, it was converted to offices and renamed the Blum Building. The addition's architect was A.S. Alschuler, whose best known work is the London Guarantee and Accident Building at 360 N. Michigan Ave.

Tenants in the building in the 1920s included Augustus Eugene Bournique's dancing schools and two select women's clothiers, Stanley Korshak's Blackstone Shop and Blum's Vogue. The illuminated "Torco" sign atop the building was added in the 1960s.



The current Musical College Building is nearly double the height of the original building. (See photo on page 32.) At right, a sketch of the building's ground floor from 1937.



17. ARCADE BUILDING

(Later known as the IBM Building; now the Spertus College of Judaica)

618 S. Michigan Ave.
Date: 1913
Architect: William Carbys Zimmerman

Date of Alteration: 1958
Architect: McClurg, Shoemaker and McClurg

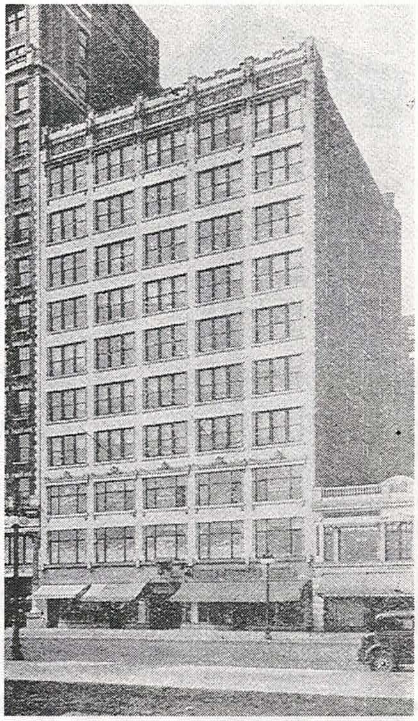
The original design of this 10-story building featured a gridlike facade, with large windows and minimal masonry surfaces (see photo at right).

The original architect was William Carbys Zimmerman (1856-1932), whose firms included Flanders & Zimmerman and Zimmerman, Saxe & MacBride, before he became the Illinois state architect in 1914. Among his designs were the fieldhouses for Pulaski and Eckhart parks in Chicago and several buildings on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield.

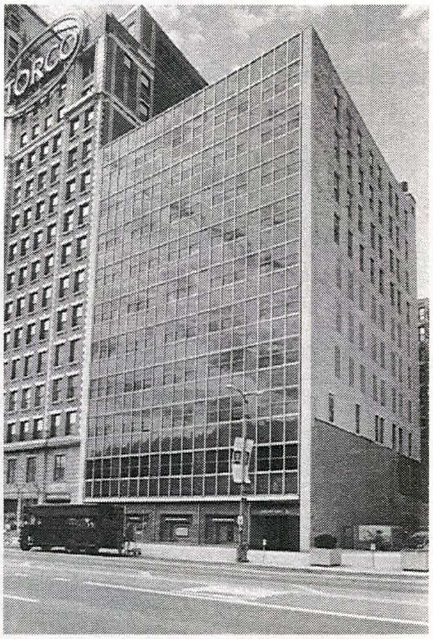
The building got its names from the specialty shops that originally occupied its two lower floors. Among them were furriers, millinery, and gowns. The building's upper floors were used for more general office uses, such as photographers, publishers, a teachers college, and the American Red Cross.

The facade of the original 1913 design was reclad with metal and glass in the late-1950s for the International Business Corporation (IBM), which had purchased the building in 1944. While contemporary with the building fronts at 816 S. (a 1957 remodeling for Olivetti) and 200 S. Michigan (a new 1958 building for Borg-Warner), the modernized facade of the Arcade Building does not relate well to the design characteristics of the vast majority of the streetwall.

In 1972, the building became the Spertus College of Judaica. Located within the college are the Spertus Museum and the Norman and Helen Asher Library, the largest circulating library of Judaica in the Midwest.



The Arcade Building, as it appeared in a 1929 Business Directory (above), and after its facade was reclad with a metal-and-glass skin (below).

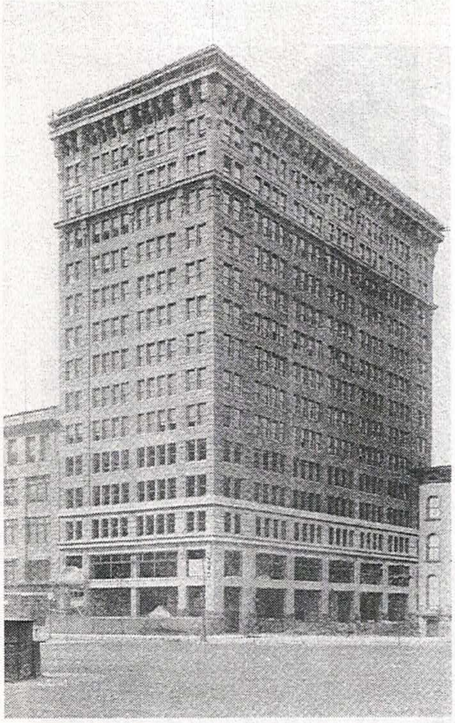


18. 608-14 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

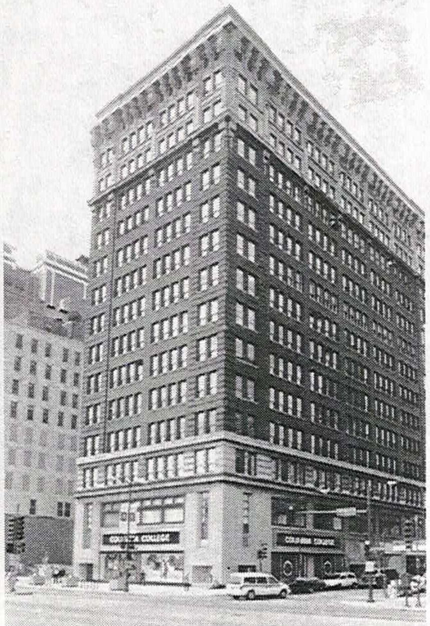
This vacant parcel was formerly occupied by two buildings: a two-story commercial structure and a five-story loft building, apparently constructed in 1906 for developer E.T. Blair. They were demolished in 1978.

The loft building at 608-10 S. (see photo at left and on page 32) was refaced with terra cotta in 1911 by A.S. Alschuler. Among its early tenants was the Arts Club; a later occupant was the Wilson-Jump furniture company.

A carpet store and fireplace company were among the occupants of the commercial structure at 612-14 S. (at right in photo on page 35, top).



The Harvester Building now occupied by Columbia College previously was the headquarters of two agricultural machine companies. Above, during construction in 1907; below, in 1994.



19. HARVESTER BUILDING

(Later known as the Fairbanks-Morse Building; now known as Columbia College)

600 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1907

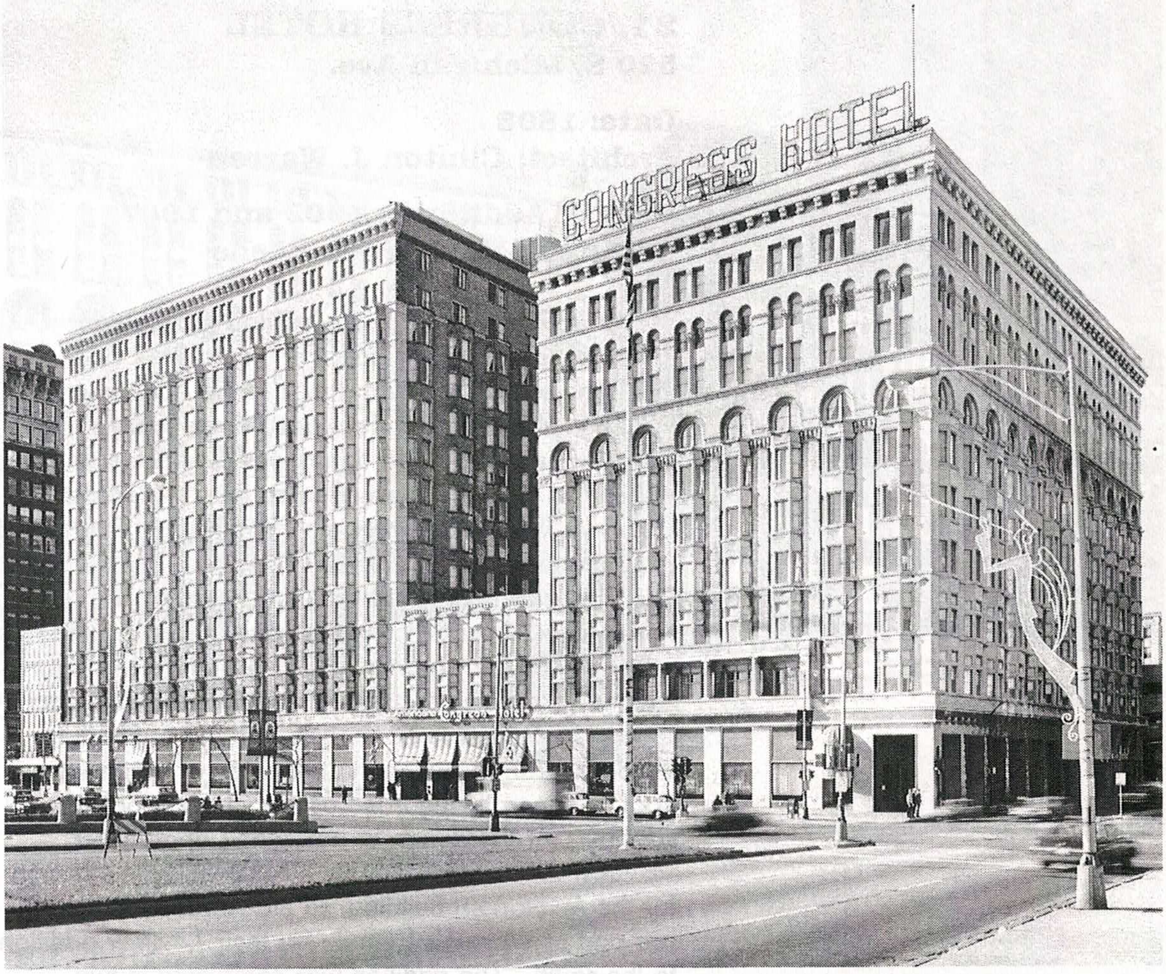
Architect: Christian Albert Eckstorm

This imposing granite, red brick, and limestone building was erected by the International Harvester Company, which had its origins with Cyrus McCormick's production of the reaper, an implement that transformed nineteenth-century agriculture.

A massive bracketed cornice dominates the 15-story building, which was designed by C.A. Eckstorm, the architect responsible for two other structures along the Michigan Avenue streetwall: the Musical College Building (at 624 S.) and the Sherwood Conservatory of Music (1014 S.; see description on page 21).

The Fairbanks-Morse Company, one of the world's largest manufacturers of engines for railroads, farm machinery, and irrigation systems, moved into the building in 1937. The company's previous headquarters at 900 S. Wabash Ave. also had been designed by Eckstorm (still extant).

A 1930 scheme in the archives of Holabird & Roche shows a planned, but never completed, five-story addition for this building. The storefront, however, has been altered from its original appearance.



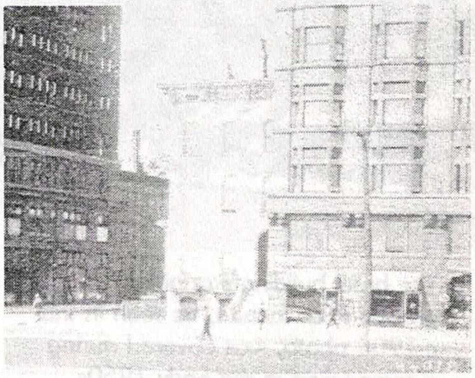
The Congress Hotel was built in four stages: the right half and low mid-block building in 1892; the large section at left in 1902 and 1907; and the low building (far left) in 1958. The latter may have been a remodeling of a post-Fire rowhouse (see photo below).

20. CONGRESS HOTEL ANNEX

538 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1958

Architect: Camburas & Theodore



This six-story, glass and steel building, now an annex to the Congress Hotel, was designed by a local firm, Camburas & Theodore, as an independent small hotel. It is most likely a remodeling of a three-story, pre-Fire rowhouse that long stood on the site. However, the new facade has little relationship to the streetwall's style or materials.

21. CONGRESS HOTEL
520 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1893
Architect: Clinton J. Warren

Date of Additions: 1902 and 1907
Architect: Holabird & Roche

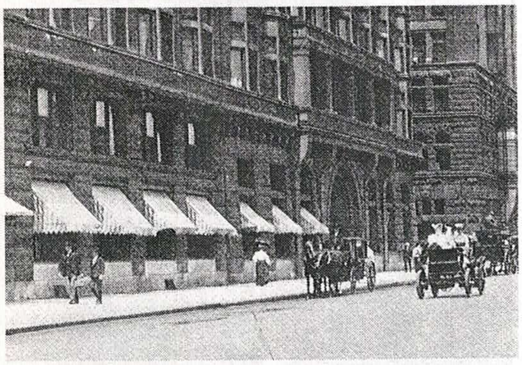
In 1893, just before the World's Columbian Exposition began, developer Ferdinand Peck opened the Congress Hotel as an annex to the Auditorium Building, which he had developed three years earlier. The 11-story, 400-room annex was connected to the Auditorium by a marble-walled corridor underneath Congress Parkway. A three-story south wing included private apartments.

The fenestration, stringcourses, cornice line, and rough-faced limestone masonry base (since covered with polished gray granite) of the building's Michigan Avenue facade were carefully calculated by architect Clinton J. Warren to harmonize with the Auditorium Building. Warren, trained in the office of Burnham and Root, is generally regarded as the Chicago School specialist for the design of hotels and apartments.

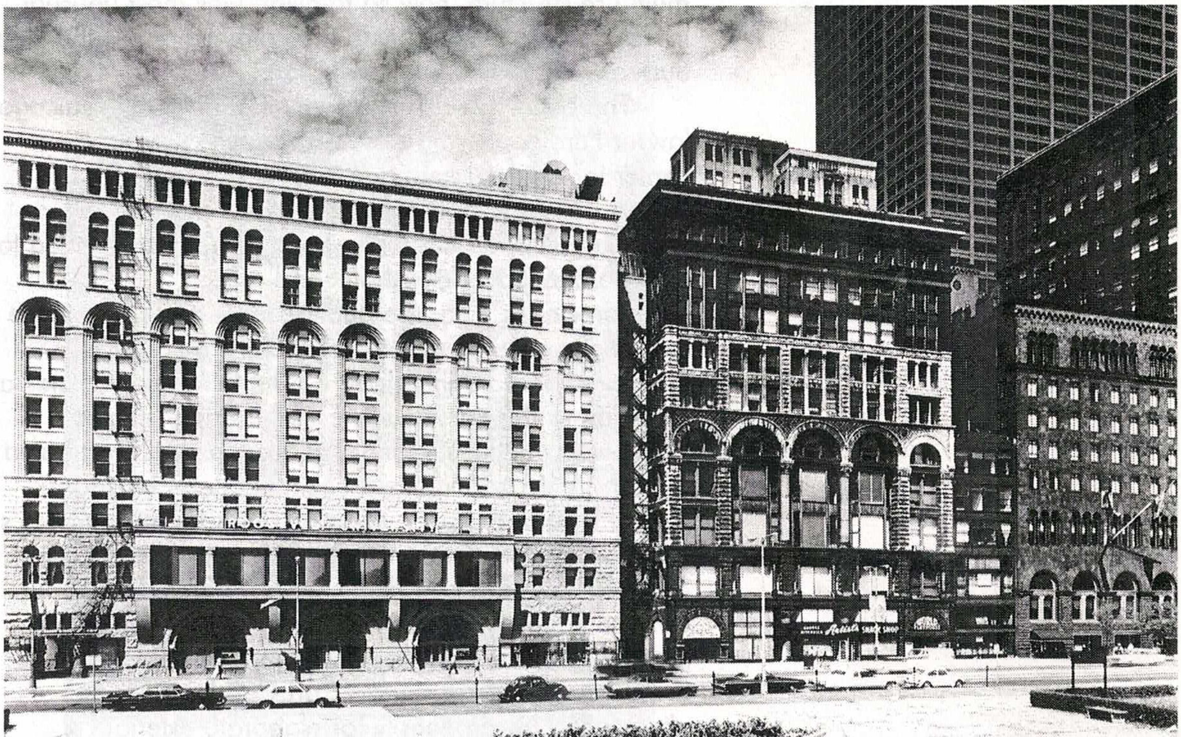
Just as Warren followed Adler & Sullivan's design for the Auditorium Building, so did Holabird & Roche use part of Warren's formula for their 14-story addition to the south. The addition was completed in two phases, with the first four bays constructed in 1902 and the remainder (and new top floor) in 1907.

The straightforward exterior belied the lavish interior public spaces. The most remarkable space was the two-story Pompeian Room, a re-creation of a first-century A.D. design that featured Edward J. Horslag murals and a Tiffany-designed skylit atrium and fountain. Almost as opulent was Peacock Alley, a marble-walled corridor. These spaces do not remain; most were removed when the Army occupied the hotel during World War II.

The covered walkway along Congress was carved into the building in 1951 when the road was widened. Around this time, the building's base and arched entrance were removed. The building was further renovated by the Albert Pick Hotel Company in 1959-62, which coincided with the opening of the McCormick Place convention center.



The hotel building's original ground floor facade, as seen in this c.1906 photo, was covered during a remodeling in the early 1950s.



The block between Congress and Van Buren included (from left): the Auditorium Building, the Fine Arts Building, the Fine Arts Annex, and the Chicago Club.

22. AUDITORIUM BUILDING

430 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1886-90

Architect: Adler & Sullivan

As one of the largest and most complex projects of late nineteenth-century Chicago, the Auditorium Building played a pivotal role in changing Chicago's reputation from that of a primitive prairie town to Midwestern America's urban center. Its 17-story office tower dominated the city's skyline at the time and housed an observatory at the top.

The partnership of Louis Sullivan (1856-1924) and Dankmar Adler (1844-1900) lasted only 14 years, but their completed works profoundly influenced the course of American architecture. The Auditorium--considered one of the firm's finest works--is the only major Adler & Sullivan building left in Chicago. The concept of a multi-use structure, now so familiar, was most unusual in 1886 when they received the commission. At the time Sullivan was only 30 years old, and Adler was 42.

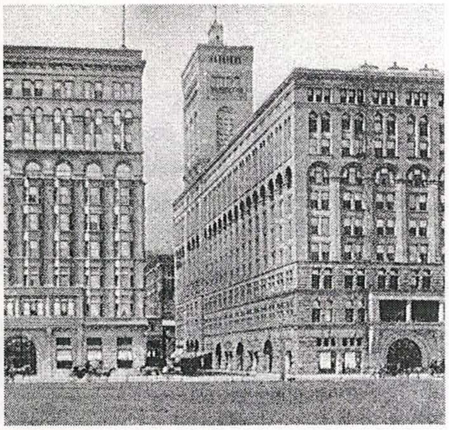
The building was the brainchild of wealthy Chicago lawyer Ferdinand W. Peck who wanted a grand civic center for opera, symphony, and dance as well as society balls and political conventions. In order to financially support his cultural program, Peck decided to incorporate space for a hotel and offices.

Ten stories high, the Auditorium is faced with huge blocks of rusticated granite for the first two stories. Rusticated Bedford limestone on the third floor creates a transition to the flat limestone of the upper stories. Windows, whether straight-edged or curved, are treated as a rhythmic arrangement of simple geometric forms.

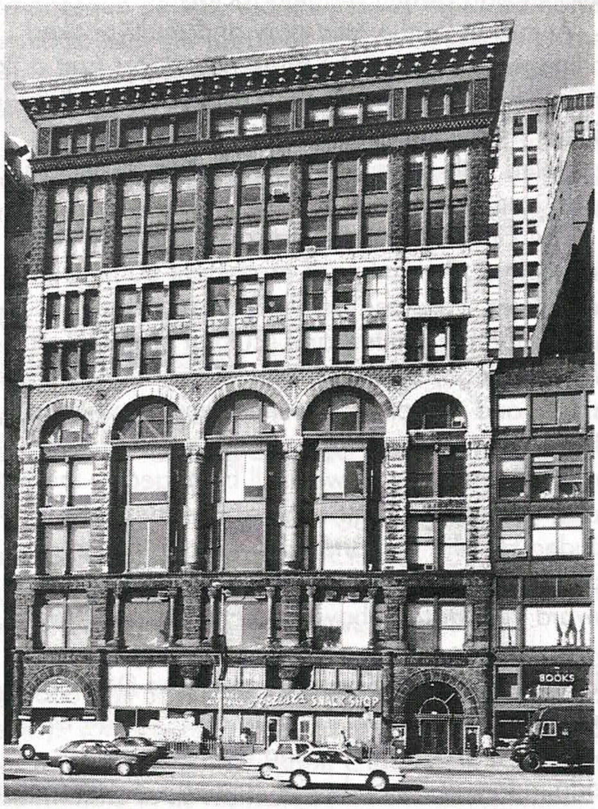
In light of the subsequent acclaim for the building's monumental simplicity, it is interesting to note that Sullivan's initial designs included terra-cotta facade ornamentation, a gable roof, dormers, corner pinnacles, and oriels. "Fortunately for architecture everywhere," notes historian Carl Condit, "Sullivan abandoned his propensity for elaborate exterior ornament and concentrated on the architectonic effect of mass, texture, and the proportioning and scaling of large and simple elements." Sullivan was responsible for the building's elaborate interior ornamentation, which bypassed historical forms for a new vocabulary based on organic forms.

The Auditorium also showcases many engineering achievements. It was the first building wired for electric lights and the most thoroughly fireproofed building ever constructed until then. It included a complex system of supporting truss arches and a unique ventilating system for the theater, which was also renowned for Adler's excellent acoustics and sight lines.

The theater operated until 1929, when the Depression, along with the opening of the Civic Opera House on Wacker Drive, forced the building into bankruptcy. Taken over by the City, the building was used as a U.S.O. center during WWII. In 1946, the building was purchased by Roosevelt University, which restored several of the more significant rooms. In 1960, the school established the Auditorium Theater Council to restore and operate the theater. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, declared a National Historic Landmark in 1975, and designated a Chicago Landmark in 1976.



This detail from a c.1900 postcard demonstrates the harmonious design of the Congress Hotel (left) and the Auditorium, even though they were built four years apart.



The top three floors of the Fine Arts Building were added in 1898. The annex (right) was built in 1891.

23. FINE ARTS BUILDING

410 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1885; addition, 1898
Architect: Solon S. Beman

The Fine Arts Building, originally known as the Studebaker Building, was built as a warehouse and showroom for the wagons and carriages made by the five Studebaker brothers who began their manufacturing operation in South Bend, Indiana, in 1852.

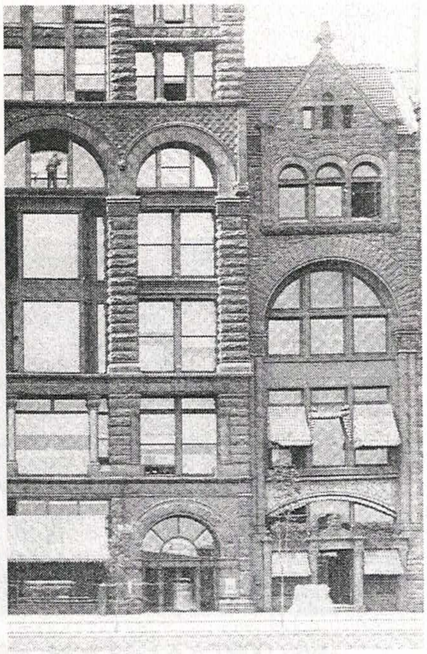
Ten years later the company moved to larger headquarters at 623 S. Wabash Ave. but, in an early example of adaptive reuse, asked their architect Solon Beman (who had designed the planned industrial community of Pullman in 1880) to convert the rusticated red granite and gray limestone building into an artists' center. They were persuaded to do so by Charles C. Curtiss, the son of a former mayor, who was a music publisher and owned a piano factory.

At that time, the attic story and multi-peaked roofline were replaced by three new floors and a flat cornice; the lobby walls were finished in scagliola (an artificial marble); and the interior corridors were completed with carved wood and glass doors, hall clocks, and ornamental stair railings.

The Fine Arts Building became Chicago's first artists colony. A number of prominent painters had studios here, including Ralph Clarkson, the city's leading portrait painter, and sculptor Lorado Taft. John T. McCutcheon, cartoonist and illustrator, and brothers Frank X. and Joseph C. Leyendecker, commercial artists, not only found space in the building but congenial company as well. All belonged to the "Little Room," an informal gathering whose members also included Hamlin Garland, Henry Blake Fuller, and architects Irving and Allen Pond, Hugh M. Garden, Howard Van Doren Shaw, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

A number of respected literary journals were published in the building, including *The Dial, Poetry: A Magazine of Verse,*and the controversial *The Little Review*. The Fine Arts Building was also the headquarters of a number of women's organizations, including The Fortnightly of Chicago and the Daughters of the American Revolution. After 1900, it became the center of the women's suffrage movement in Illinois.

The building and its annex at 408 S. Michigan were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and designated as a Chicago Landmark in 1978.



The original Romanesque-style front on the Fine Arts Annex (right) was removed sometime after 1909. The current facade can be seen in the photo on the preceeding page.

24. FINE ARTS ANNEX

408 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1891; alteration c.1910

Architect: Solon S. Beman

The six-story building immediately to the north of the Fine Arts Building was added as an annex when the building was still owned by the Studebaker Building. Its original Romanesque-style facade was designed to harmonize with the main building and the original Art Institute building (built 1886) to the north.

After Studebaker moved out in 1895, the building was occupied by the Chicago Musical College. In 1909, after the college moved to a new location at 624 S. Michigan, the building's facade was stripped of its

Romanesque details, wider windows replaced narrow openings, and the roof was fitted with skylights. The top floor became the Thurber Art Gallery, which was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright (no longer extant).

A second annex to the Fine Arts, which fronts on Wabash Avenue (421 S.), was designed in 1924 by the firm of Rebori, Wentworth, Dewey, and McCormick.

25. CHICAGO CLUB

81 E. Van Buren St.

Date: 1929-30
Architect: Granger and Bollenbacher

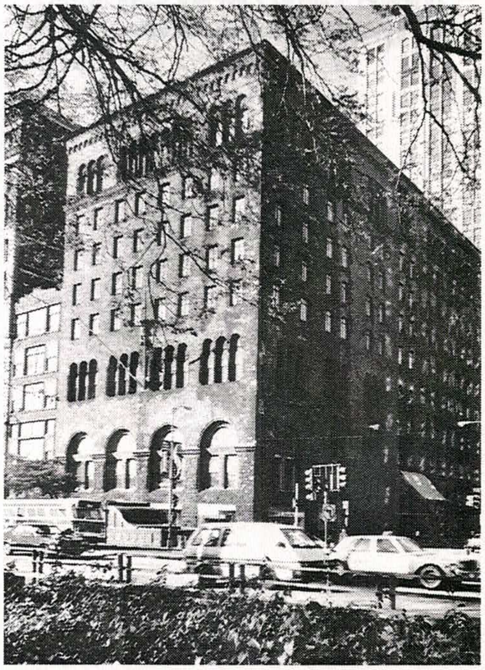
The Chicago Club grew out of Chicago's first business club, the Dearborn Club of 1861. Its founders included banker Lyman Gage, real-estate entrepreneur Potter Palmer, and merchant Marshall Field.

The building's appearance lives up to the club's reputation as an exclusive enclave. Although its facade displays some overtones of the then-popular vertical skyscraper style, Romanesque characteristics predominate in its rusticated and smooth-finished stonework. Arched windows were used on the lower and upper stories, and a corbeled cornice tops the building.

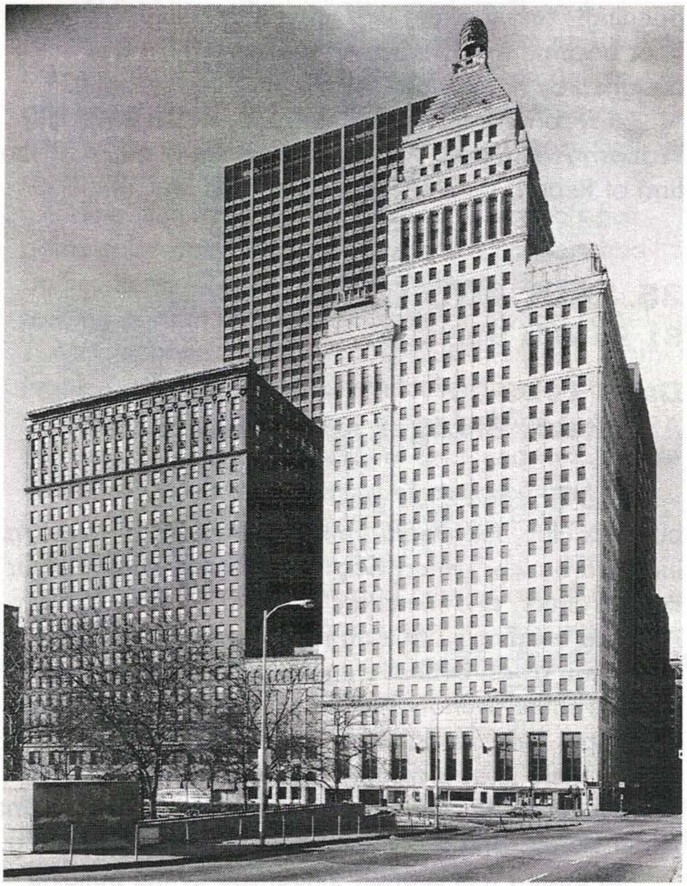
Its design was strongly influenced by the building that had long stood on the site, the original Art Institute, which was designed in 1886 by Burnham and Root (see photo on page 6). The Chicago Club took possession of the building in 1893, when the Art Institute moved to its new museum in Grant Park.

When the old building collapsed during remodeling in 1929, plans were drawn up for a replacement. In addition to emulating several details of the old building, such as its arched openings and height of the base, a portion of the original structure was reconstructed as the new building's main entrance.

The architects, Alfred Hoyt Granger (1867-1939) and John C. Bollenbacher (1884-1939), were educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As partners, they were responsible for a number of institutional buildings, including the Winnebago County Courthouse at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



The Chicago Club is the last building constructed along the Michigan Avenue streetwall prior to World War II.



The block between Van Buren and Jackson includes (from left): the McCormick, Karpen, and Straus buildings.

26. McCORMICK BUILDING

332 S. Michigan Ave.

Dates: 1908-10 and 1911-12
Architect: Holabird & Roche

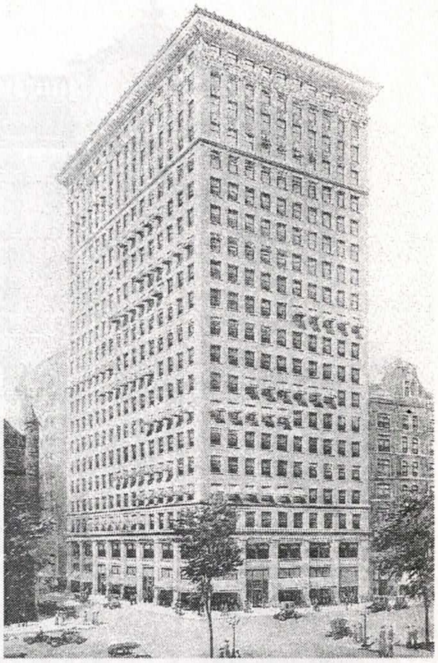
The 20-story McCormick Building provided very deep--and exceptionally well-lit--office space, due to its exposure both to an interior light court and frontages on Michigan Avenue and Van Buren Street. Original tenants included many lumber and construction firms.

Holabird & Roche's treatment of the building design is uncomplicated: a granite base, an unadorned shaft of gray Roman brick and a modestly decorated overhanging cornice. As one critic wrote in 1910: "Its architecture is not calculated to attract remark. If there is beauty in simplicity, here it is."

The building actually was constructed in two sections: the corner portion in 1908-10 and the northern eight bays two years later, following demolition of a seven-story hotel and a three-story commercial building.

The ground floor provided retail space for Spaulding & Company, the distinguished jeweler and silversmith founded in 1855 and formerly located on State Street. Another first-floor lessee was the Allegretti Chocolate Cream Company, for whom Holabird & Roche designed the interior soda fountain and ice cream parlor. (The original storefronts were remodeled after World War II.)

The commission for the building came from Robert Hall McCormick, acting as trustee for his father, Leander McCormick, who with his brother Cyrus had run the huge McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. After retiring in 1881, Leander McCormick's interests were his Chicago real estate investments, a practice he bequeathed to his son Robert.



A drawing of the McCormick Building, before it was expanded (to the right) in 1912.

27. KARPEN BUILDING

(Formerly the Hotel Richelieu)

318 S. Michigan Ave.

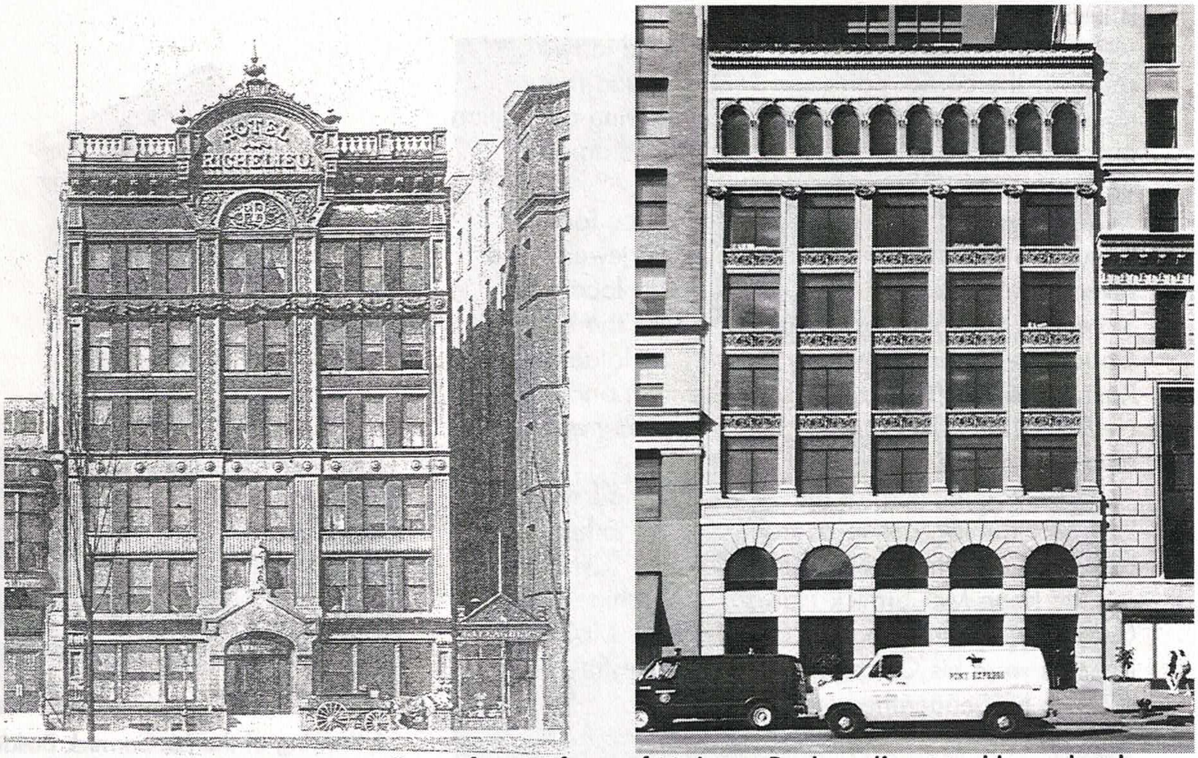
Date: 1885
Architect: Unknown

Date of Alteration: 1899
Architect: Hessenmueller and Meldahl

The Karpen Building is actually an extensive remodeling, including a new terra cotta facade, of one of the streetwall's most-famous "lakefront hotels," the 125-room Hotel Richelieu. (See photo on next page.)

Constructed in 1885, it was described in *Rand McNally & Co.'s Bird's-Eye Views and Guide to Chicago* of 1898 as having "the indefinable thing called 'tone' such as to attract guests of great reputation and large wealth." It was further noted that the Richelieu was "located as advantageously as the Auditorium" and that the chef "has a high reputation for culinary ability."

The building was remodeled in 1899, with an Italianate-Classical style facade, for S. Karpen and



The Karpen Building (right) is actually a refacing of one of Michigan Boulevard's original luxury hotels, the Richelieu (left).

Brothers, one of the nation's largest manufacturers of upholstered furniture. The company moved to 910 S. Michigan Ave. in 1911 (see description on page 23).

Subsequent occupants included another furniture company, a clothing manufacturer, an organ dealer, the Chicago Women's Club, and Findlay Galleries. In 1983, the City renovated the building for its Department of Housing. Work included a new rusticated stone base.

28. STRAUS BUILDING

(Later CNA; now Britannica Center)

310 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1923-24

Architect: Graham, Anderson, Probst and White

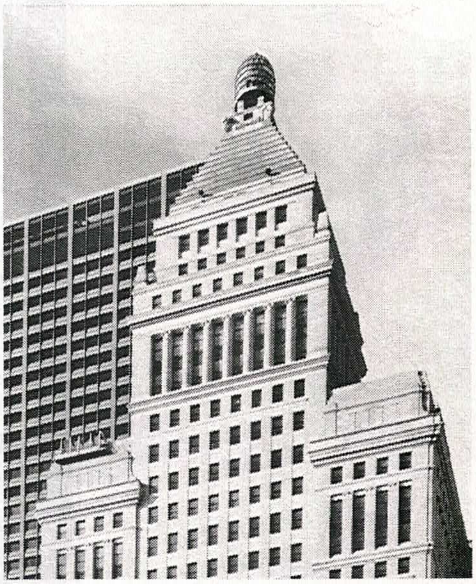
Exhibiting a setback skyscraper design, the Straus Building was the first structure in Chicago to take advantage of the city's 1923 zoning ordinance. The new law permitted buildings taller than 260 feet, provided the space above did not exceed 25 percent of the building and was set back from the property lines.

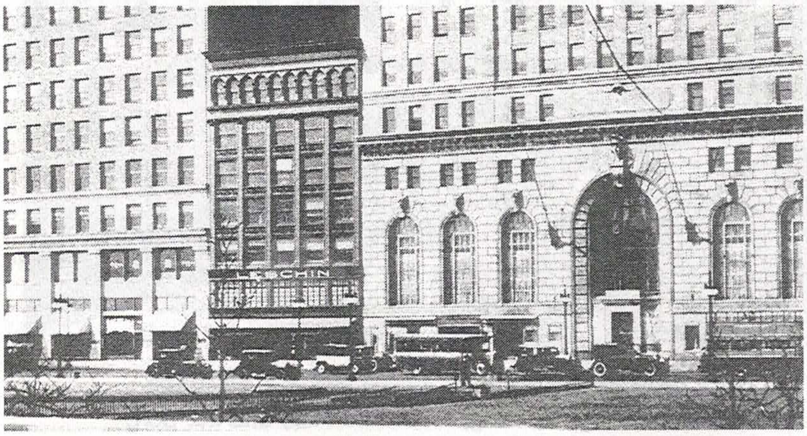
"The top of the Straus Building is a stepped pyramid, trumpeting its modernity," architectural historian Sally Chappell notes, "but the rest of the structure is a traditional office building, richly ornamented with historic references." Clad in Indiana limestone, with a cornice in line with the Railway Exchange and McCormick Building (to the north and south, respectively) and a base of Roman arches, the Straus Building displays a traditional classicism.

These references are suggested in the glass beehive--supported by four bison heads--that crowns the pyramid. The beehive, with its association to thrift and industry, was appropriate for a building commissioned by an investment banking firm, S.W. Straus and Company. Searchlights, which beamed in all directions from the beehive, were replaced in 1954 by a blue light. The stepped pyramid remains floodlit.

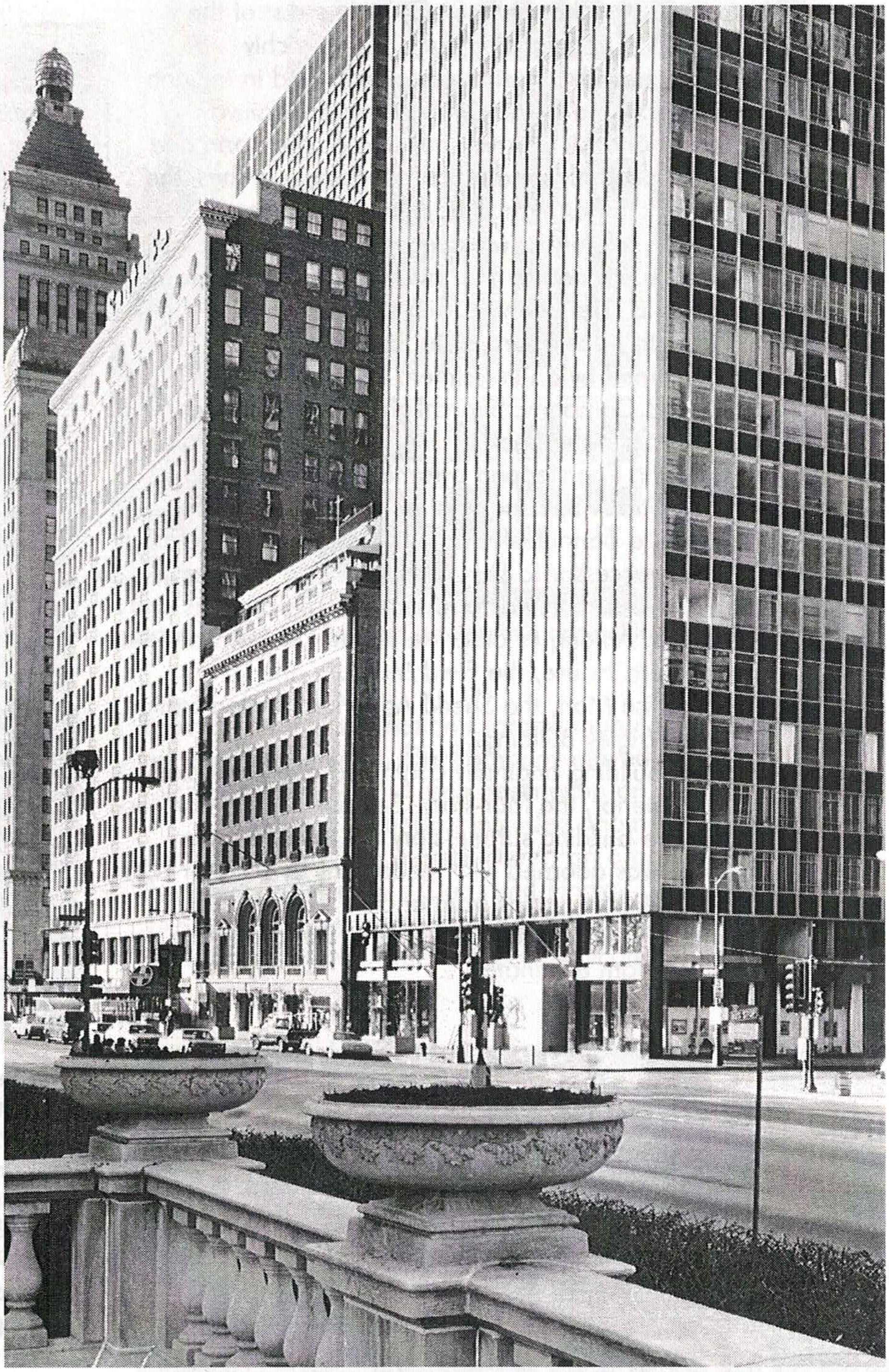
The Straus Building was the last work of Pierce Anderson, a partner of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. A successor to D.H. Burnham and Company, Graham, Anderson was a favorite of corporations and institutions. Among its other well-known designs are the Civic Opera House, the Field Museum, the Merchandise Mart, the Shedd Aquarium, Union Station, and the Wrigley Building.

The building originally contained one particularly opulent interior, the four-story, Beaux-Arts style Banking Room. The building's three-story tall, arched main entrance was adorned with medallions by sculptor Leon Lentelli, depicting coins from ancient Greece. The ground level was remodeled in the 1940s, and the Banking Room eliminated.

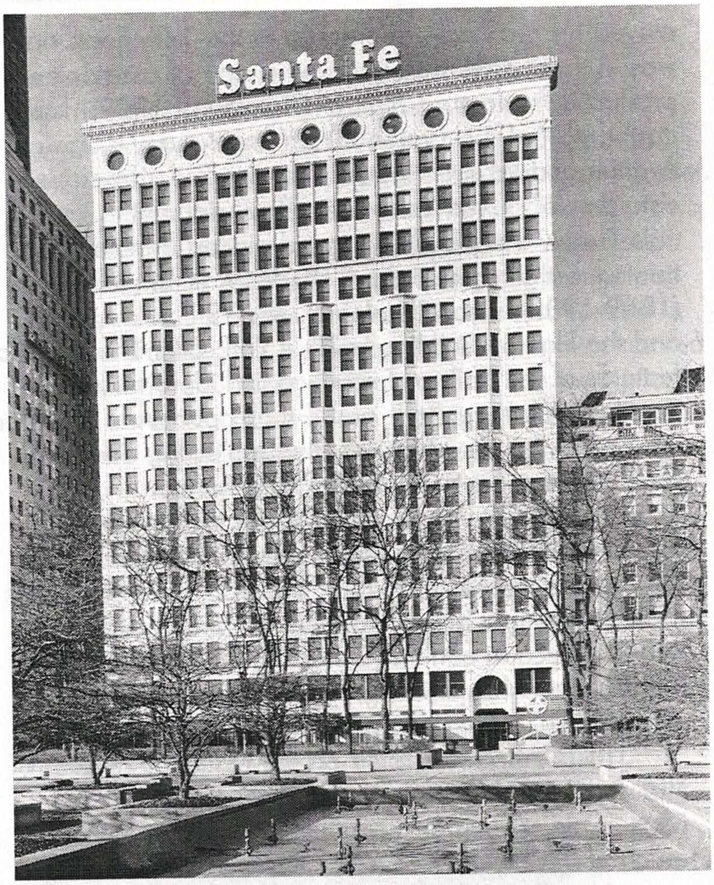




The Straus Building (above) was the first along the streetwall to take advantage of the 1923 zoning ordinance that encourage tower setbacks. Its ground level (at right in photo at left) originally featured an arched main entrance. Also visible in that 1928 photo are the original storefronts of the McCormick and Karpen buildings.



The block between Jackson and Adams includes (from left): the Railway Exchange Building, Orchestra Hall, and the Borg-Warner Building. At far left, the Straus Building.



A 1983 view of the Railway Exchange Building from the Art Institute's south garden.

29. RAILWAY EXCHANGE BUILDING

(Later known as the Santa Fe Building)

224 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1903-04
Architect: D.H. Burnham and Company

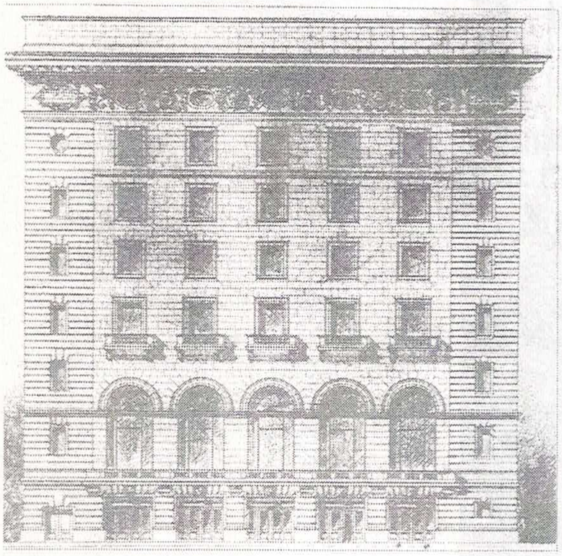
The Railway Exchange Building was erected at a time when the railroad industry was so successful that it could build elaborate administrative headquarters in prime downtown locations. In this case, it was for the offices of the Santa Fe Railway Company and two other railroads (the Milwaukee and the Alton).

Daniel Burnham (1846-1912), whose firm designed the building, was a major stockholder of the development company that built it. He subsequently moved his architectural practice to the 14th floor, and it was in these offices that he and a staff of assistants produced the famous *Plan of Chicago* of 1909. No doubt, part of their vision for an improved Michigan Avenue and lakefront came from the underdeveloped vista they observed from their office windows.

The 17-story building was designed by one of the firm's most gifted designers, Frederick P. Dinkelberg (1869-1935), whose work includes 35 E. Wacker Dr. and the Flatiron Building in New York City. The classical features of the Railway Exchange include ornamental dentils, column capitals, and Greek goddesses (between the circular windows). Alternating projecting and flush bays create a gently undulating wall surface.

The white, glazed terra cotta on the building's exterior--and interior light court--was intended to be a dramatic counterpoint to the black soot-laden buildings of the Loop, much like the firm's Reliance Building of nearly a decade earlier. (Other D.H. Burnham designs include the Fisher Building, Marshall Field & Co., the Museum of Science and Industry, and Orchestra Hall.)

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. A renovation at that time, by Metz, Train, Youngren/Frye Gillan Molinaro, retained much of the building's architectural splendor. The light court was converted to an interior atrium for modernized offices, and the long-tarred over lobby skylight was cleaned. The building's commercial storefronts were returned to their former elegance.



A preliminary 1902 design for Orchestra Hall, before several changes were made.

30. ORCHESTRA HALL

220 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1904-05
Architect: D. H. Burnham and Company

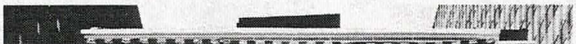
Date of Addition: 1907-08
Architect: Howard Van Doren Shaw

Not just a concert hall, Orchestra Hall is a monument to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's founder and first conductor, Theodore Thomas, who was brought to Chicago in 1891. Thomas, who styled himself as a "musical missionary," sought to refine the tastes of his Midwestern listeners who were accustomed to the light concerts of French and Italian composers. He also reached out to city slumdwellers, organizing a series of "Workingmen's" or "People's Concerts," a practice that survived for decades.

Throughout the 1890s, the Chicago Symphony performed on the main stage of the Auditorium Theater. Dismayed by the large size of this venue, Thomas threatened to resign unless the Orchestral Association agreed to build a smaller concert hall. Unfortunately, Thomas died just a few weeks after the first concert in the new building. In his honor, the building was named the "Theodore Thomas Orchestra Hall," an inscription that is carved in stone above the entrance.

Built of brick, detailed with cream-colored limestone quoins, lintels, and other decorative elements of the Georgian Revival style, the facade is symmetrical and graced by tall, second-floor arched windows. The building's design is indicative of its architect's preference for revival styles. (See description on 224 S. Michigan Ave.)

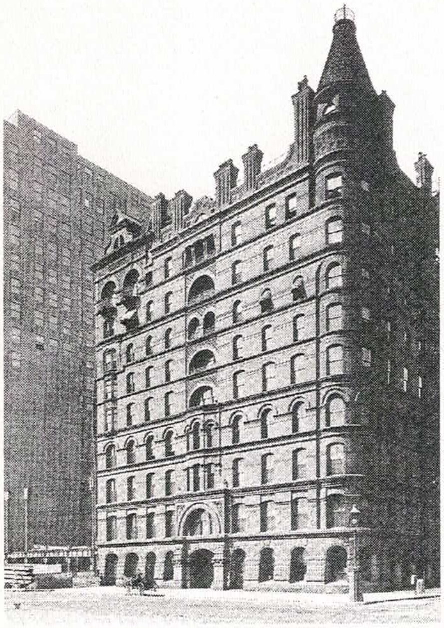
A ninth-floor addition, including a veranda facing Grant Park, was designed by respected Chicago architect Howard Van Doren Shaw for the Cliff Dwellers, an arts club for artists and their patrons



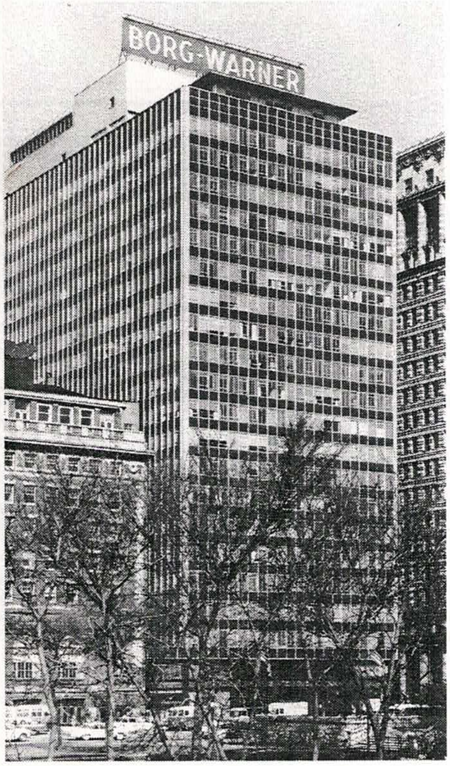
The appearance of Orchestra Hall has remained much the same since it was built in 1904-05. This photo dates from 1977.

founded in 1907. The club took its name from the novel, *The Cliff Dwellers,* by Chicagoan Henry B. Fuller (who never bothered to join the club). One of its most famous members was architect Louis Sullivan, who wrote much of his *Autobiography of an Idea* at the club.

Orchestra Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and declared a National Historic Landmark in 1994.



In the past century, two buildings very characteristic of their eras have occupied the site at 200 S. Michigan. The Pullman Building (above) was torn down in 1956, and the Borg-Warner Building replaced it.



31. BORG-WARNER BUILDING

200 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1958

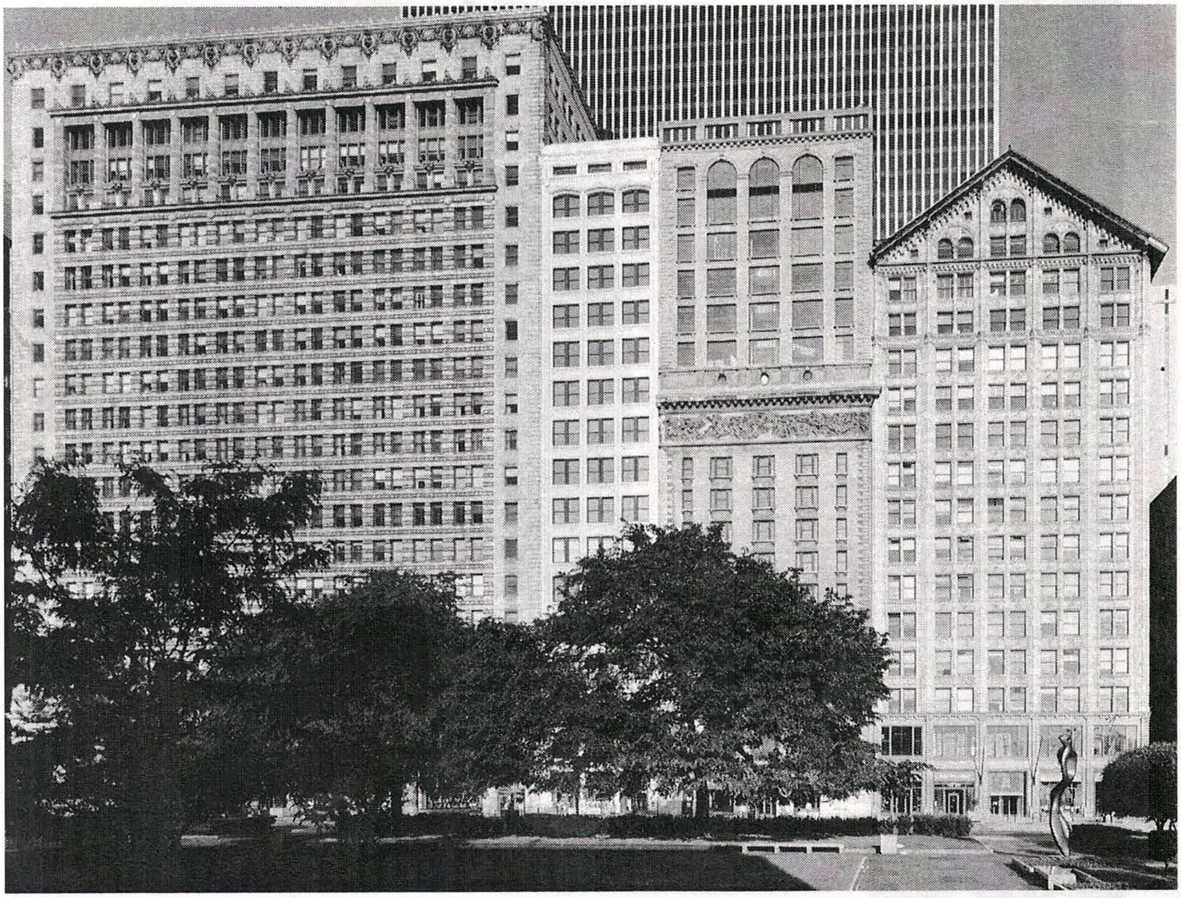
Architect: William Lescaze,
with A. Epstein & Sons

Borg-Warner, a machine tool manufacturer, chose modernist architect William Edmond Lescaze to design its new building at the corner of Michigan and Adams. The Swiss-born Lescaze (1896-1969) was credited for bringing the International Style to the United States; his most acclaimed work being the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building of 1932.

The 22-story Borg-Warner Building, according to architectural historian Carl Condit, is Chicago's most prominent example of "the neutral curtain wall of glass and enameled steel that was made popular by Lever House in New York (1950-52). Although its height is compatible with the rest of the buildings in the proposed district, its non-masonry materials, recessed base, lack of a cornice, and absence of wall surface between windows are at odds with the streetwall's general design characteristics.

A small, two-story "wing," which extends from the south wall of the building, permits more light to reach the offices along the south face of the building. (This wing was scheduled to be replaced, as of late 1994, by a narrow, side addition to Orchestra Hall.)

The Pullman Building, a prominent luxury apartment and office building, had occupied the site of the Borg-Warner Building between 1884 and 1956. One of the pioneer high-rise structures along Michigan Avenue, it predated both the Auditorium and the Fine Arts Building. It was designed by Solon S. Beman, the designer of the Pullman industrial community on the city's South Side.



The block between Adams and Monroe includes (from left): the Peoples Gas Building, the Municipal Courts Building, the Illinois Athletic Club, and the Monroe Building.

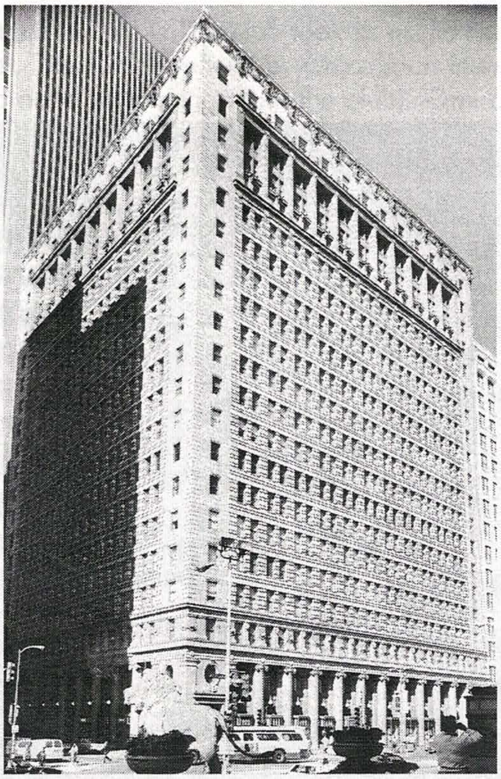
32. PEOPLES GAS BUILDING

122 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1910-11
Architect: D.H. Burnham and Company

This 21-story structure is richly clad in the grand manner of the classical tradition. The ornate, layered effect of the facades identifies it as the work of D.H. Burnham and Company office designer Frederick Dinkleberg.

The lower part of the building is constructed of granite, including massive, two-story tall, non-



The colossal scale of the Peoples Gas Building projected a fitting image for a large utility company.

loadbearing polished columns. The upper stories are faced with terra cotta, which is glazed with a spattered finish to simulate granite.

A projecting cornice was taken down sometime after 1930. The building's exterior also, at one time, was illuminated by hundreds of lights below the cornice and at the third-floor level. Clearly, the architects intended an overall impression of monumentality, an effect in keeping with the corporate image of the city's sole gas distribution company.

The ground floor was designed with a central, skylit bill paying room that was as opulent as most bank lobbies (no longer extant). The first-floor storefront windows featured displays promoting "modern" gas appliances, and guidebooks of the day singled the building out for special attention.

Local pride in this newest building on the skyline prompted one Chicagoan traveling abroad to stand in front of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, but dismiss it with the comment: "This is well and good, but give me Peoples Gas any day."

The building was built on the site of the company's earlier headquarters, the Brunswick Hotel. Prior to the hotel, several historic residences had occupied the site, including those of prominent early Chicagoans H.H. Honore (whose daughter, Bertha, married hotelier Potter Palmer) and William H. Brown, in whose white-marble mansion Abraham Lincoln was entertained just prior to his election as President in 1860.

Ornamental storefront bays on the ground floor are a later, sympathetic alteration. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. The interior light court was remodeled in 1985-87 by Eckenhoff Saunders Architects.

33. MUNICIPAL COURTS BUILDING

(Later known as the American Conservatory of Music Building; now 116 S. Michigan.)

116 S. Michigan Ave.

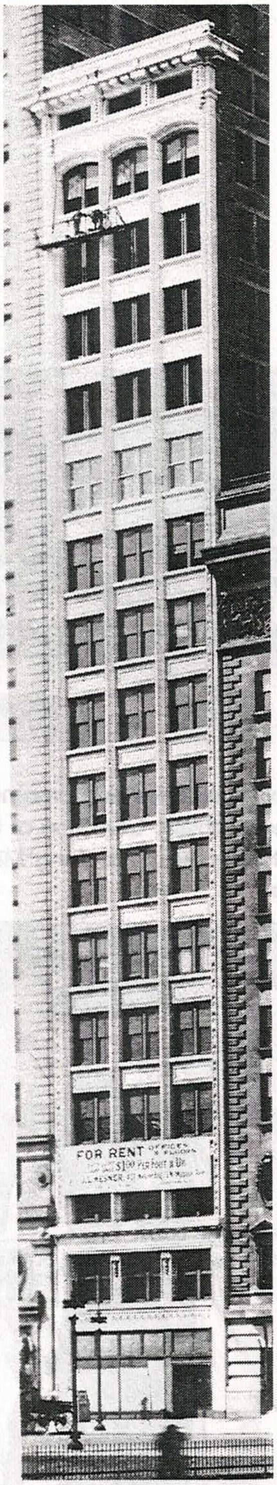
Date: 1906; addition 1912

Architect: Jenney, Mundie & Jensen

The facade of this 16-story structure is sheathed in a white, enamel-glazed terra cotta with a matte finish. The visual effect of the terra-cotta ornament is subtle, since the decoration is close to the wall surface and delicately detailed. Motifs include a stylized bead and reel motif, key patterns, and Renaissance-style floral patterns.

The Municipal Courts Building was constructed in 1905 by real estate entrepreneur Jacob Levi Kesner, who leased it to the City for use as courtroom space until a new City Hall was completed. After the City vacated the building in 1911, four additional stories were added to enhance its attraction as a commercial rental property. Advertisements of the day referred to it as the "Lake View Building," an indicator of its prestigious location.

This was one of three buildings developed by Kesner in association with architects Jenney, Mundie & Jensen and their successor firm, Mundie and Jensen. In its design for the Municipal Courts Building, the firm, which was founded by William LeBaron Jenney in 1868,



The Municipal Courts Building in 1912, shortly after four new stories were added.

carried on in the Chicago School spirit, of which Jenney was an influential figure.

The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. The current storefront is the result of an early-1980s remodelling.

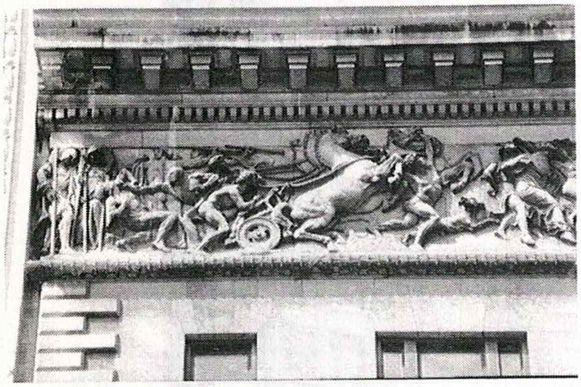
34. ILLINOIS ATHLETIC CLUB

(Later known as the Charlie Club; now a dormitory for the School of the Art Institute.)

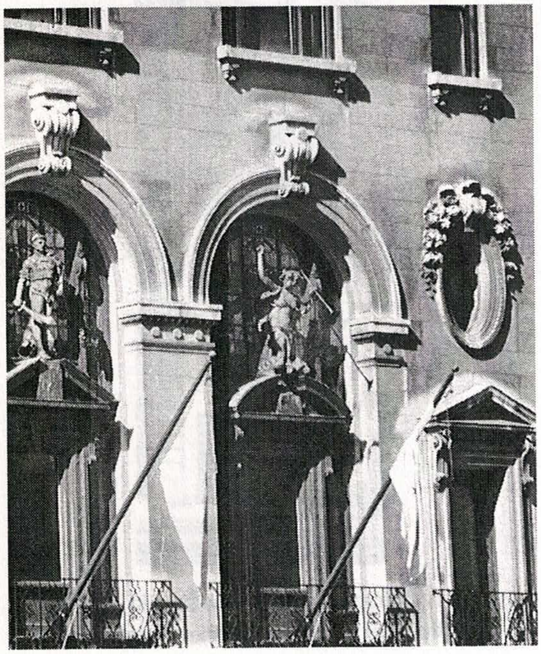
112 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1908
Architect: Barnett, Hayes and Barnett

Date of Addition: 1985
Architect: Swann & Weiskopf



Its heroic sculptures and ornament make the Illinois Athletic Club one of the most eye-catching buildings along Michigan Avenue.



The Illinois Athletic Club was established in 1904 by former members of the Chicago Athletic Club who were displeased with the latter's lack of athletic competition.

Unusually ornate, the new building was designed in the Beaux Arts style by a prominent St. Louis architectural firm, Barnett, Hayes and Barnett. Among the building's more noteworthy features is an elaborately carved stone frieze just under the cornice that depicts the god Zeus seated among runners, wrestlers, discus throwers, and other competitors. The sculptor was Leon Hermant (1866-1936), who also created the "Louis Pasteur Memorial," originally located in Grant Park, but moved in 1946 to the front of Cook County Hospital. A set of heroic bronze sculptures sits atop pediments in the second-floor arched windows.

In the mid-1980s, six floors were added to the building to accommodate its new use as the Charlie Hotel and Fitness Center. The addition is generally compatible with the rest of the buildings in the district, particularly in its use of masonry and its window-to-wall relationship. However, its height detracts from the distinctive gabled roof profile of the Monroe Building to the north (see photo on page 53).

The building was acquired by the School of the Art Institute in 1993 for use as a dormitory and classroom building.

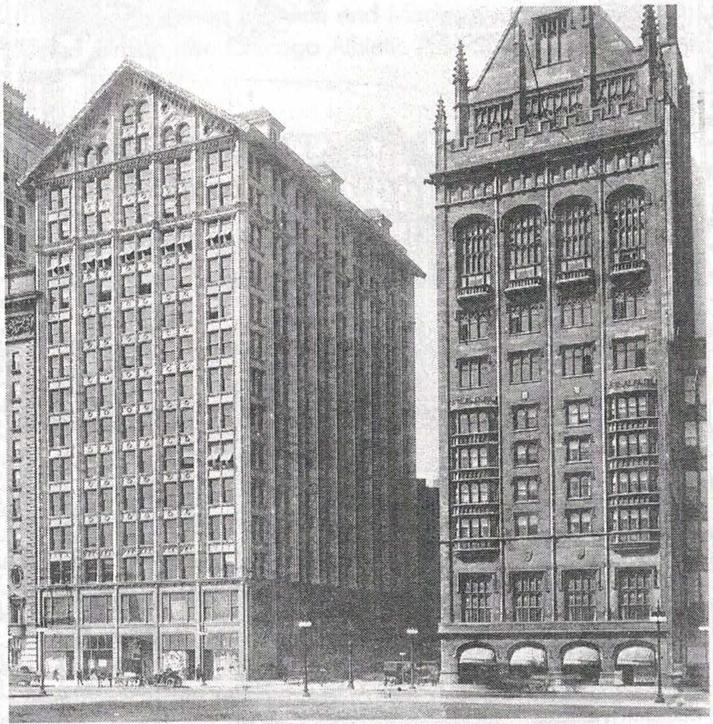
35. MONROE BUILDING
104 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1910-12
Architect: Holabird & Roche

Some consider the Monroe Building to be an example of Holabird & Roche's abandonment of the Chicago School style of architecture for a less creative, eclectic style. Yet, it was developer Shepherd Brooks of Boston who insisted that the building be harmonious with the silhouette of the adjacent University Club.

In a 1921 speech before the Building Managers' Association, architect William Holabird noted that the building was "an illustration of how an owner sacrificed his own interests for the benefit of the community."

The 14-story skyscraper is clad in polished granite, at its base, and highly modeled terra cotta above, with a distinctive gabled roof that is compatible with the peak of the University Club. In further deference to the club's design, the Monroe Building is laden with Gothic detail, both inside and out. Its lobby is particularly

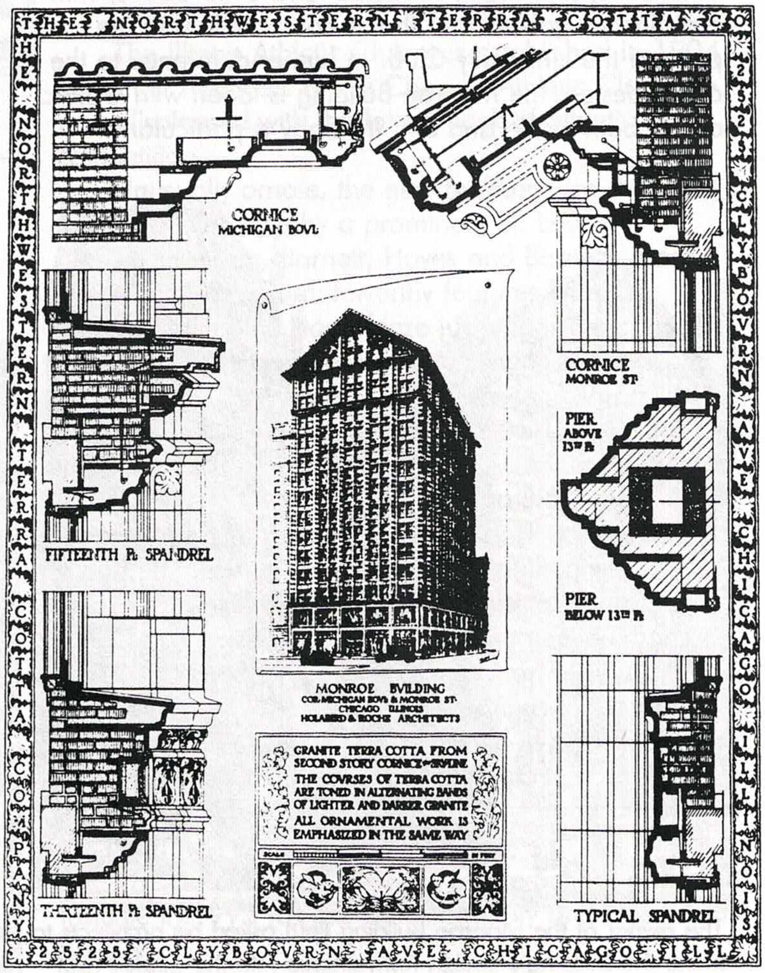


The owner of the Monroe Building (left) asked his architects to make the building's design harmonious with the gabled roof silhouette of the then two-year-old University Club.

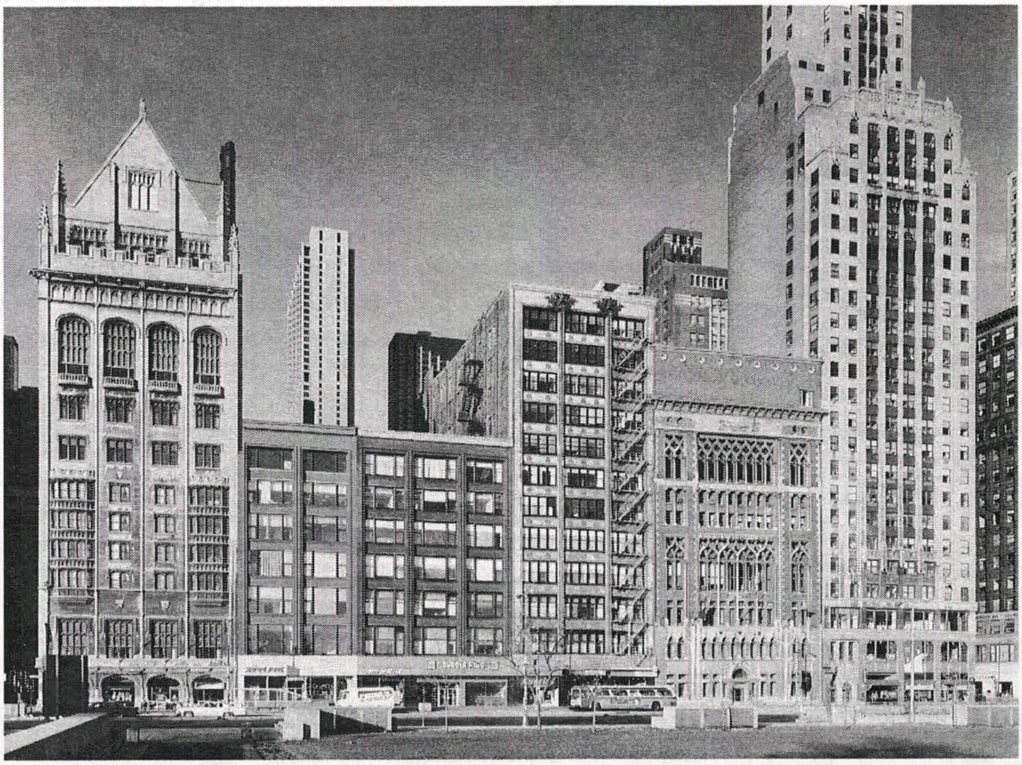
memorable, featuring a long, narrow L-shaped arcade capped by a vaulted ceiling enhanced by checkered borders, twisted columns, and a patterned floor.

Of special note is the lobby's multi-colored Rookwood tile. The Rookwood firm was founded in 1880 by Cincinnatian Maria Longworth Nichols. Part of the Arts and Crafts movement, the pottery studio was known for unusual glazes, subtle colors, and naturalistically rendered plant and animal motifs. The Monroe Building lobby is considered one of the finest examples of Rookwood detailing in the country.

Holabird & Roche established their offices in the two-story gabled attic shortly after the building was completed. They were soon joined by a number of other well-known architects, including: Schmidt, Garden and Martin, Walter Burley Griffin, Barry Byrne, and Frank Lloyd Wright.


THE NORTHWESTERN TERRA COTTA CO
THE NORTHWESTERN TERRA COTTA COMPANY
2525 CLYBOVRN AVE CHICAGO ILLINOIS
2525 CLYBOVRN AVE CHICAGO ILL
CORNICE MICHIGAN BOVL
CORNICE MONROE ST
PIER ABOVE 13TH FL
PIER BELOW 13TH FL
FIFTEENTH FL SPANDREL
THIRTEENTH FL SPANDREL
TYPICAL SPANDREL
MONROE BUILDING
COR. MICHIGAN BOVL & MONROE ST.
CHICAGO ILLINOIS
HOLABIRD & ROCHE ARCHITECTS
GRANITE TERRA COTTA FROM SECOND STORY CORNICE TO SKYLINE
THE COVRSES OF TERRA COTTA ARE TONED IN ALTERNATING BANDS OF LIGHTER AND DARKER GRANITE
ALL ORNAMENTAL WORK IS EMPHASIZED IN THE SAME WAY
SCALE

A 1915 advertisement for the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company, highlighting its work on the Monroe Building.



The block between Monroe and Madison includes (from left): the University Club, the three-building Gage Group, the Chicago Athletic Association, and Willoughby Tower.

36. UNIVERSITY CLUB

76 E. Monroe St.

Date: 1907-08
Architect: Holabird & Roche

The University Club was founded in 1887, but did not move into this building until 1908. Club members initially reacted unfavorably to this steel-frame skyscraper sheathed in Tudor Gothic "clothing," feeling that a building this tall smacked of the commercialism of a hotel rather than the domesticity of a private club. But the small site, combined with extensive space requirements for social and athletic functions, dictated the building's 12-story height.

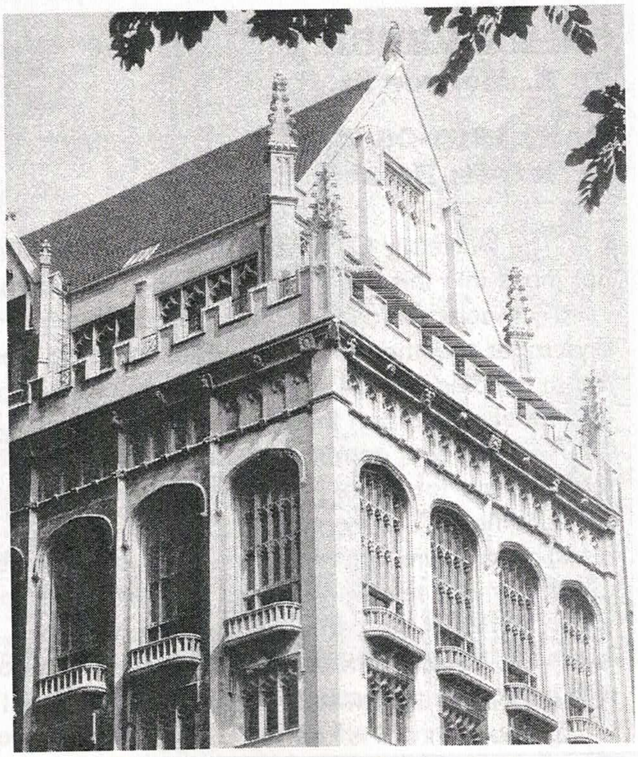
The structure has a prominent two-story gabled roof and many references to the medieval style: large Gothic spires at the corners of the roof, windows framed in tracery, a band of trefoiled panels, a cornice with gargoyles, projecting bays, and a crenelated parapet, to name a few. The design by Holabird & Roche partner, Martin Roche (1855-1927), was reportedly endorsed by Ralph Adams Cram, then believed to be the greatest living American authority on Gothic architecture.

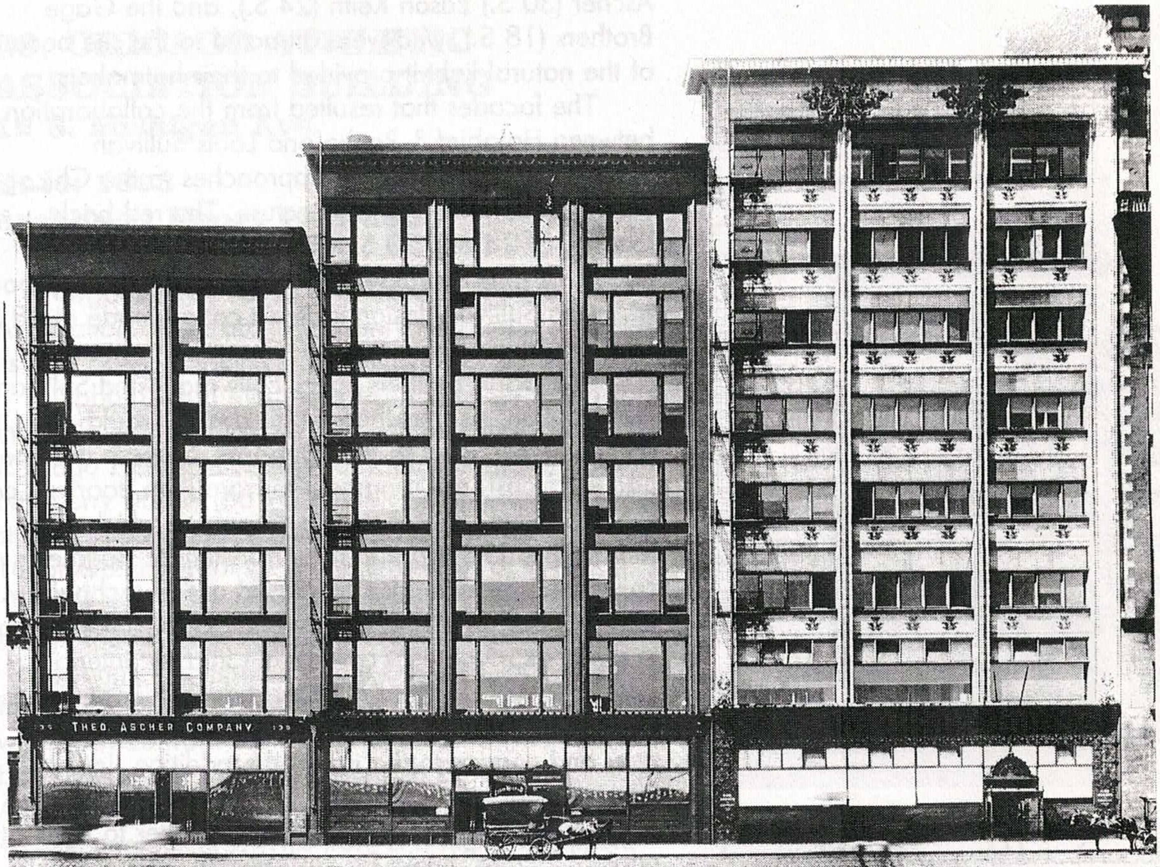
Even the interior of the University Club is resplendently Gothic, due in large part to the contribution of artist Frederic Clay Bartlett (1873-1953), whose works are also found at the University of Chicago and the Fourth Presbyterian Church. He also did the murals (no longer extant) for City Hall's City Council Chamber.

Cathedral Hall, the dining room on the ninth floor of the University Club, was patterned after the fifteenth-century Crosby Hall at Bishopsgate. Bartlett created 12 stained-glass windows for this room, with five devoted to great American colleges and seven depicting various professions. Dark glass is used at the top to keep the carved-wood ceiling in shadow, but clear glass at the bottom to take advantage of the views of Lake Michigan. Another notable achievement is the second-floor Michigan Room, where Bartlett created 56 painted ceiling panels depicting scenes of the medieval hunt.

The original arched, storefront openings on the ground floor are still intact, in stark contrast to the remodelled storefronts of its neighbor, the Gage Group.

The University Club's Gothic details, such as carved grotesques (above), conjure up a collegiate imagery.





A 1900 photo of the Gage Group buildings, before four stories were added to the building at the right. A more contemporary view of the buildings appears on page 59.

37. THE GAGE GROUP

18, 24, and 30 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1898-1900
Architect: Holabird & Roche;
Louis Sullivan

Date of alterations: 1902; 1971
Architects: Holabird & Roche;
Altman-Saichek Associates

This group of structures was built as a real estate investment by Stanley McCormick, on land given to him as a birthday present by his father, Cyrus Hall McCormick. The three buildings originally were occupied by the wholesale millinery firms of Theodore

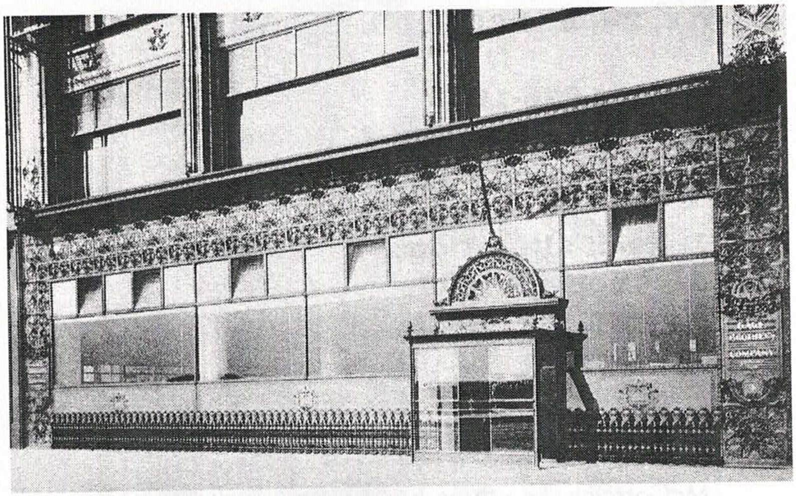
Ascher (30 S.) Edson Keith (24 S.), and the Gage Brothers (18 S.), who were attracted to the site because of the natural light it provided to their hatmakers.

The facades that resulted from the collaboration between Holabird & Roche and Louis Sullivan demonstrate their different approaches to the Chicago School of commercial architecture. The red brick facades of 24 and 30 S. Michigan, by Holabird & Roche, display a straightforward, functionalist approach, while the Sullivan-designed, terra cotta facade at 18 S. Michigan exemplifies a more expressive treatment.

The Gage Brothers specifically requested Sullivan's participation, as they thought his design would contribute a cachet to their business. Sullivan designed panels of cast-iron ornament to frame the doorway and shop windows. (Pieces of this ornament, which was removed in 1952, are in the Art Institute's fragments collection.) Sullivan also employed a new technology, using "Luxfer" prism glass above the clear-pane windows to direct as much light as possible into the interior.

In 1902, Holabird & Roche added four stories to the Gage Building, lifting Sullivan's ornamented attic story and cornice to the top of the addition. In 1971, a story was added to the Asher Building, making it the same height as the Keith Building. In order to match the original facade, bricks for the addition were specially made from the same kind of clay used 73 years earlier.

The Gage Group was listed on the National Register in 1985; the buildings were also recommended to the City Council for local designation at that time.



The original Louis Sullivan-designed storefront of 18 S. Michigan Avenue was removed in 1952. It was replaced by flat masonry panels.

38. CHICAGO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION BUILDING

12 S. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1893
Architect: Henry Ives Cobb

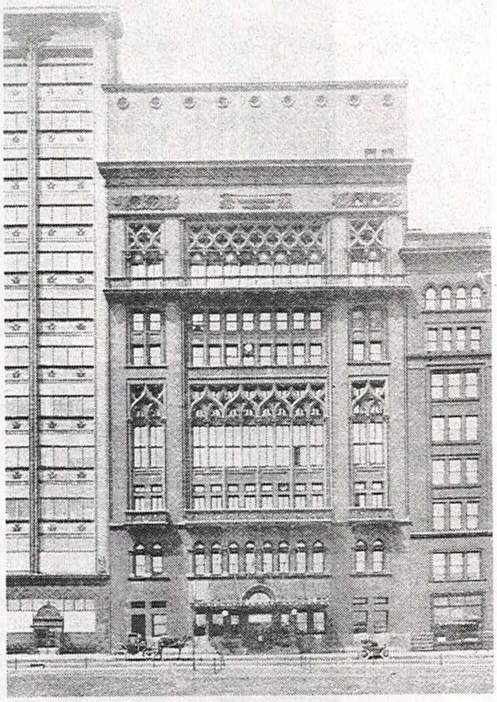
Organized in 1872, the Chicago Athletic Association chose architect Henry Ives Cobb to design its new building facing Lake Michigan.

Cobb, a club member who had come to Chicago in 1882, was well known for such buildings as the Chicago Historical Society (632 N. Dearborn) and Newberry Library (60 W. Walton), Romanesque Revival-style structures built 1887-92; as well as some of the Tudor Gothic buildings at the University of Chicago.

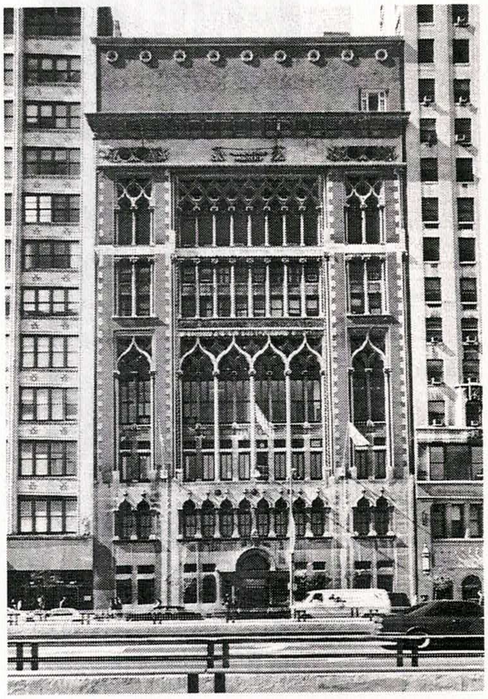
For this structure, Cobb chose a Venetian-Gothic design theme, executed in limestone and red brick, that was strongly reminiscent of the Doges Palace in Venice. Its facade was designed to give it a distinctive identity when viewed from the lakefront, and was marvelled at by visitors at the World's Columbia Exposition of 1893. As critic Montgomery Schuyler wrote at the time in *Architectural Record*: "This front is a highly intelligent and artistic performance...[that shows] what our architects have made of the architectural problem presented by the tall building."

In addition to pointed arches and a two-story colonnade topped by quatrefoil windows, the facade includes a stone panel below the lower cornice featuring stylized carvings of lacrosse sticks, balls, and rackets. Two decorative balconies that originally graced the building's front--at the third and eighth floors--were removed in the 1950s. The ground floor, however, retains much of its original design.

An annex to the building was designed by Schmidt, Garden and Martin and built in two phases (1907 and 1926). It fronts on 71 E. Madison St. and is not included in this district.



The picturesque Venetian Gothic-style facade of the Chicago Athletic Association has had only a few changes in 100 years.



39. WILLOUGHBY TOWER

8 S. Michigan Ave.

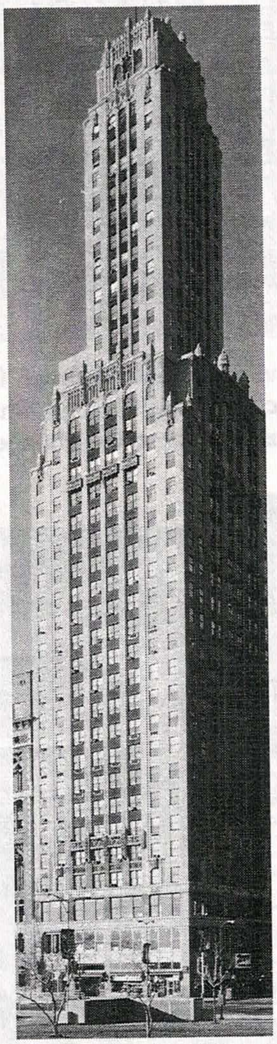
Date: 1928-29
Architect: S. N. Crowen and Associates

With a base-plus-tower configuration, Willoughby Tower is a 36-story Gothic inspired skyscraper characteristic of the expansive and speculative spirit of the 1920s, immediately prior to the Depression. The idea of expressing height through Gothic forms was popularized by the Tribune Tower, which was completed three years earlier.

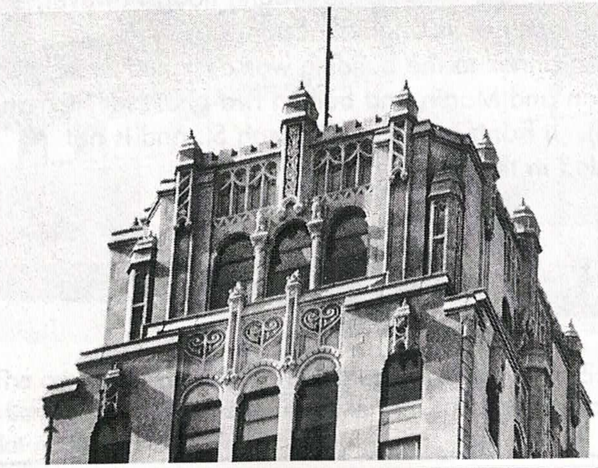
At roughly 410 feet each, the Willoughby Tower, the Straus Building (at 310 S.), and the 1130 S. Michigan Building are the tallest structures along the 13-block section of the streetwall facing Grant Park. Unlike Straus, however, whose tower is set back on two sides from the building's base, the tower portion of the Willoughby is set back on all four sides, giving further vertical emphasis to its tower.

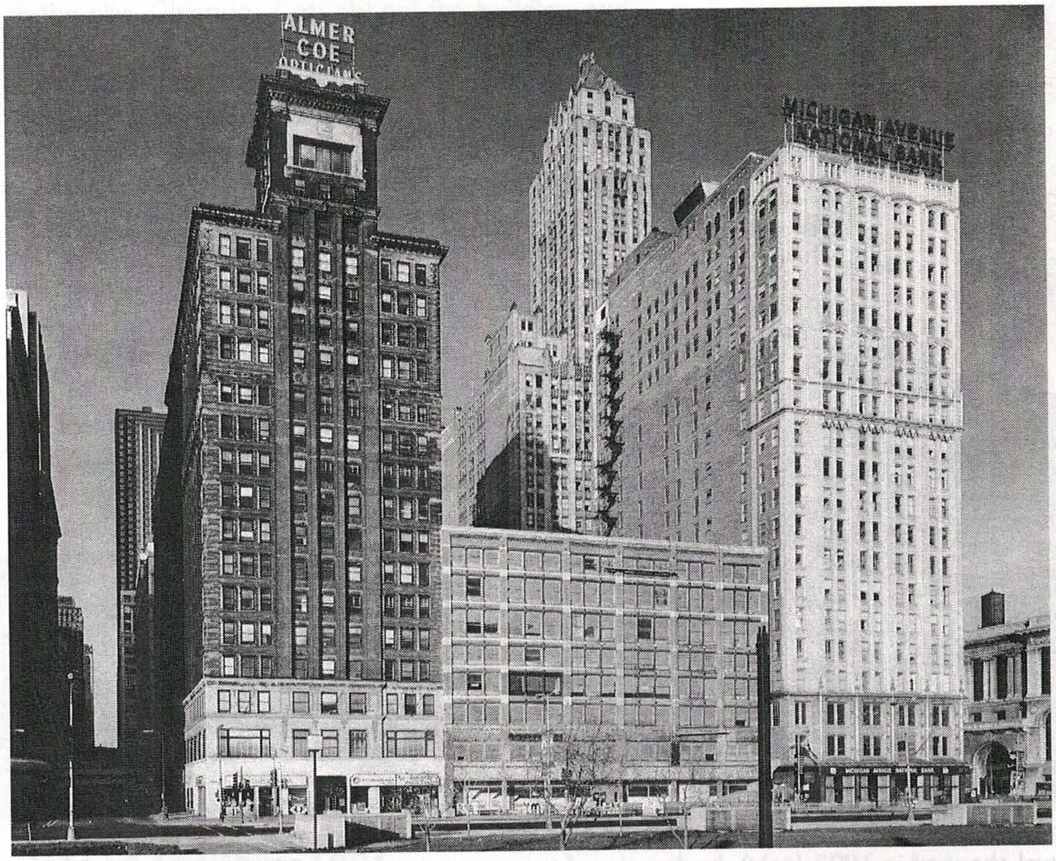
The Willoughby's facade is embellished with gargoyles, escutcheons, and leafy medallions. Its ornamented entrance invites visitors to a small, richly appointed foyer and elevator lobby, which have been said to give the sensation that one is entering a medieval bishop's palace rather than an office building.

The architect, Samuel N. Crowen (1872-1935), was largely known for his apartment house work in the Sheridan Park section of Chicago, many of which included Art Nouveau-style building details. He also designed numerous factories and commercial buildings, including the Hudson Tower in Minneapolis.



The setbacks of the 36-story Willoughby Tower are ornamented in a medieval manner.





The block between Madison and Washington includes (from left): the Montgomery Ward and Company, Smith Gaylord and Cross, and the Michigan Boulevard buildings, as seen in this 1981 photo.

40. MONTGOMERY WARD AND COMPANY BUILDING

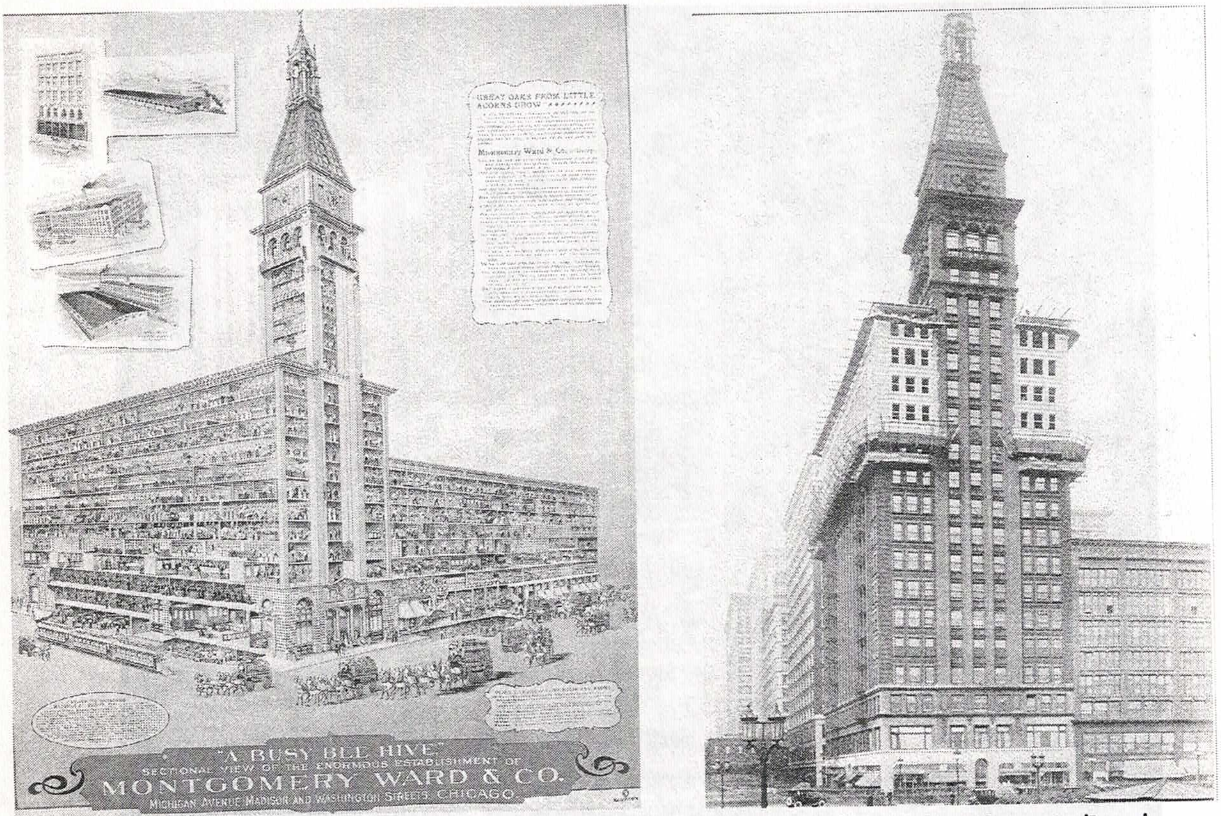
(Later known as the Tower Building; now known by its address)

6 N. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1897-99
Architect: Richard E. Schmidt

Date of Addition: 1923
Architect: Holabird & Roche

In recognition of its dual purpose as administrative headquarters and catalog warehouse for Montgomery Ward and Company, this building was originally nicknamed the "Busy Bee Hive" and was illustrated as such in early advertisements. And it was from this site that the company's founder began his lifelong crusade to protect the lakefront.


GREAT OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW
Montgomery Ward & Co.
"A BUSY BEE HIVE"
SECTIONAL VIEW OF THE ENORMOUS ESTABLISHMENT OF
MONTGOMERY WARD & CO.
MICHIGAN AVENUE MADISON AND WASHINGTON STREETS, CHICAGO.

At left, an advertisement for Montgomery Ward & Co., before its building's tower was "wrapped" and ground level changed in 1923 (right). Its sloped roof tower was removed in 1947.

The Montgomery Ward and Company building combines functional Chicago School-style design with decorative Italian Renaissance accents. The three-story marble base originally was dominated by two-story round-arched windows, as well as an impressive marble entrance featuring Ionic columns (removed c.1910). The mass of the building was sheathed in mottled, buff-colored brick, with light terra-cotta ornament depicting indigenous plants, birds, and fishes. The building's most arresting feature was its Venetian campanile-like tower which climaxed in a striking three-story pyramidal roof tiled in gold terra-cotta panels.

At the peak of the roof, an 18-foot-tall gilded weather vane, a female figure entitled "Progress Lighting the Way for Commerce," was lit by four electric beacons. The work of Scottish-American artist John Massey Rhind (1860-1936), the figure enthralled Chicagoans at the turn of the century.

The city's tallest building for many years, its observation deck was a popular tourist destination. One of the more common postcard messages was: "I came to the city--Chicago--I sought out the building and street. So, here I am up in the tower: 394 feet."

The building was the first major commission from the successful mail-order business for Schmidt, Garden and Martin, an architectural firm noted for its exceptional commercial, industrial, and hospital designs. In 1908, just nine years after moving into the building, Montgomery Ward sold it and moved to a more spacious warehouse at West Chicago Avenue and the river, designed by the same architects.

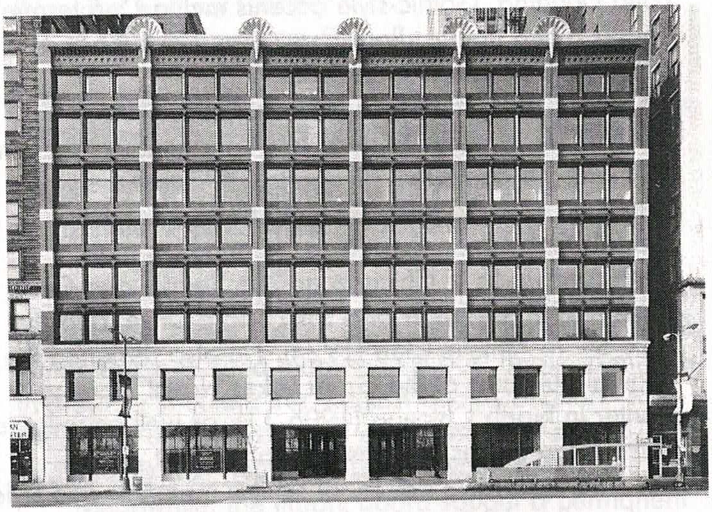
The silhouette of the now-renamed "Tower Building" was altered in 1923 when Holabird & Roche wrapped the tower on three sides with a five-story addition. In 1947, the ornamental sloped roof of the tower was judged to be structurally unsound and was demolished. The sheet metal weather vane was scrapped.

41. SMITH, GAYLORD AND CROSS BUILDING

20 N. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1882
Architect: Unknown

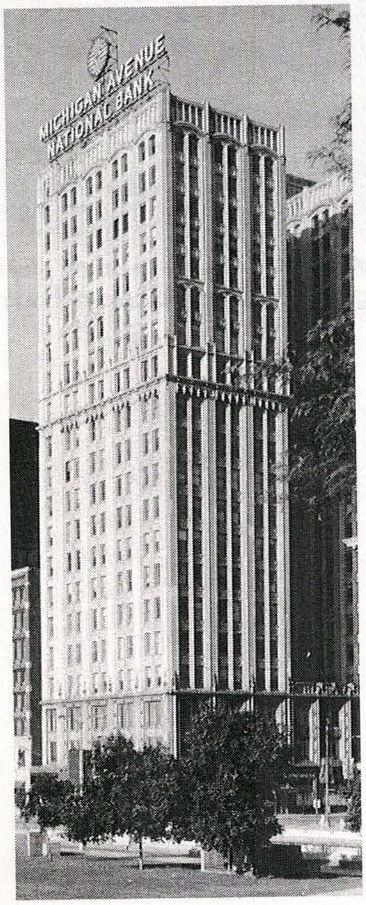
Date of Addition: 1891
Architect: Beers, Clay and Dutton



The Smith, Gaylord and Cross Building is the oldest remaining structure in the proposed district. This photo was taken following its renovation in 1983.

The eight-story Smith, Gaylord and Cross Building is the oldest remaining structure along the Michigan Avenue streetwall. Originally a two-story commercial warehouse, it was later occupied by Montgomery Ward and Company, which commissioned a six-story addition in 1891 by Minard Beers, William W. Clay, and Llewellyn Dutton. More changes were made to the building in the 1950s by John M. Smyth, the longtime Chicago furniture retailer (see photo on page 65).

In 1983, the building was converted into an office building, with a skylit atrium, remodeled base, and a recessed retail arcade on the ground floor. The shell-like ornaments that line the cornice, atop each of the building's five piers, were also installed at that time. The architect was Nagle, Hartray & Associates.



The upper five stories of the Michigan Boulevard Building were added 10 years after its initial construction.

42. MICHIGAN BOULEVARD BUILDING

(Later known as People's Trust and Saving Bank; now known as 30 N. Michigan.)

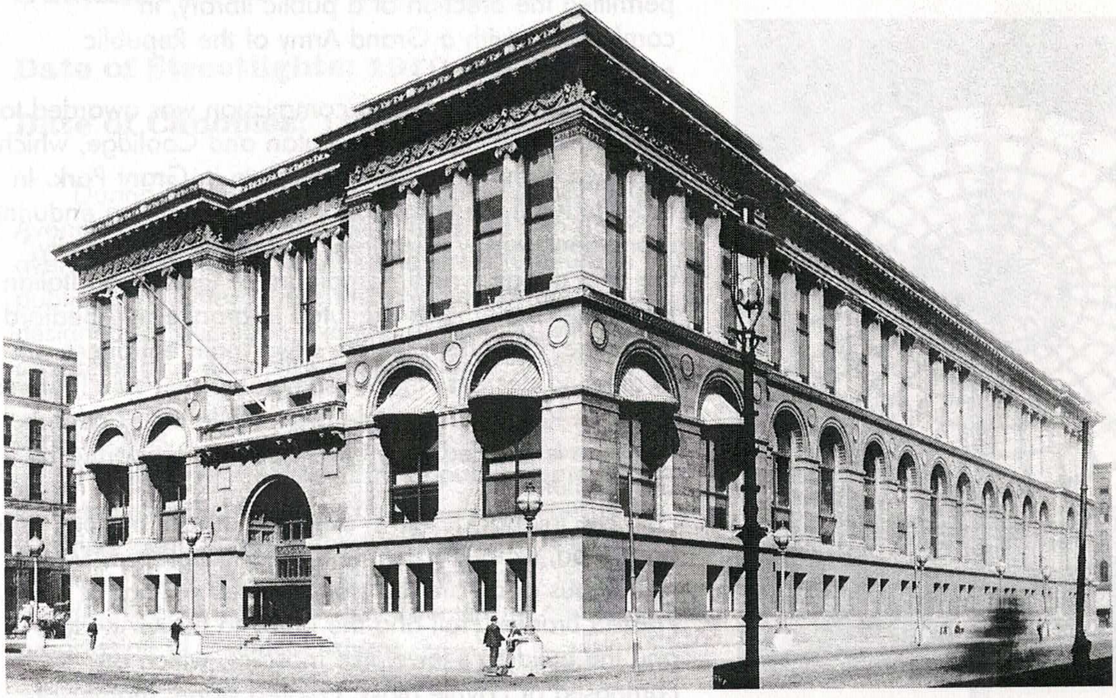
30 N. Michigan Ave.

Date: 1913-14; addition 1923
Architect: Jarvis Hunt

This 20-story building is composed of a polished granite base, bronze details, and ivory-colored terra cotta cladding. Gothic-style accents include "grotesque" figures along the first-floor cornice and trefoil bands between the window spandrels.

The architect, Jarvis Hunt (1859-1941) was the nephew of distinguished New York architect Richard M. Hunt. He came to Chicago in 1893 to supervise construction of the Vermont State Building at the World's Columbian Exposition. Among his most significant works in Chicago are the Saddle and Cycle Club (1898), at Foster and Lake Shore Drive, and the Lake Shore Athletic Club (1924). He also designed the original buildings at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in North Chicago (1906-11), as well as railroad terminals in Dallas, Kansas City, and Joliet, Illinois.

The upper five stories, of similar materials and style as the original 15, were added in 1923. A cornice line, similar to that found above the 12th floor, formerly adorned the area above the 15th floor; it was removed c.1970.



The block between Washington and Randolph is occupied by the old Chicago Public Library. This c.1900 photo shows the building's south entrance on Washington Street.

43. CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY

(Now the Cultural Center)

78 E. Washington St.

Date: 1892-97
Architect: Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge

Date of Restoration: 1977
Architect: Holabird & Root

The founding of a free public library in Chicago, dates to the Great Fire of 1871, which prompted British sympathizers to send more than 8,000 books to the city. In order to circulate this "English Book Donation," the Chicago Public Library was established in April 1872, and initially was housed in an old water tank.

Meanwhile, the library board sought a permanent site in Dearborn Park, at the southwest corner of Randolph and Michigan, a remnant of the Fort Dearborn military outpost. Unfortunately, a Civil War veterans' organization also wanted the same site, so it took until 1891 for a compromise to be reached that permitted the erection of a public library, in combination with a Grand Army of the Republic memorial hall.

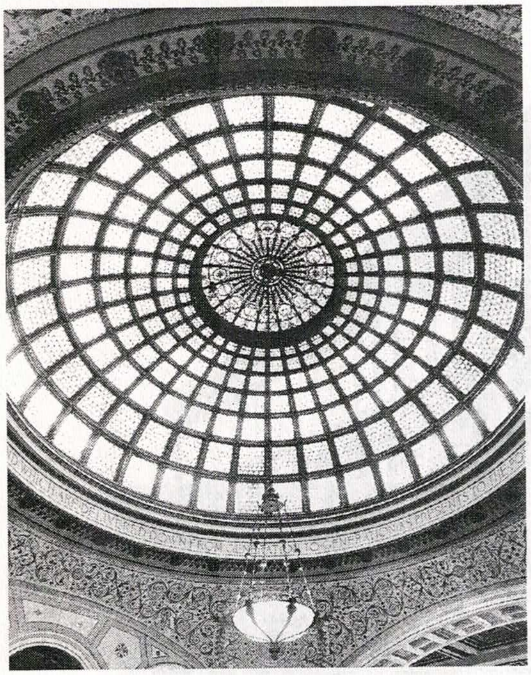
The building's design commission was awarded to the Boston firm of Shepley,. Rutan and Coolidge, which was then completing the Art Institute in Grant Park. In order to fulfill the library board's dictum of "an enduring monument worthy of a great and public-spirited city," the final design was an amalgam of Greek and Italian Renaissance elements executed in granite and Bedford limestone. Even the building's two main entrances are of differing designs; the Washington Street side features a round, Romanesque-style arch, while the Randolph entrance is capped by a Greek portico supported by Doric columns.

The interior design is executed in rare marble, fine hardwood, stained glass, and polished bronze. Most sumptuous of all are the stained glass ceilings of Preston Bradley Hall and the lobby to the GAR Hall, and the building's jewel-like mosaics, which are composed of Favrile glass, colored stone, mother-of-pearl, and gold leaf inlaid in white marble. Among the more interesting motifs are Renaissance printers' marks and quotations in 10 languages.

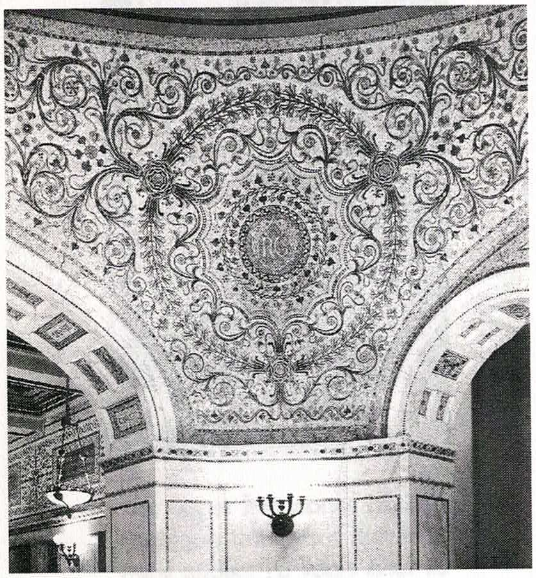
Robert C. Spencer, Jr., later famed as a Prairie School architect, assisted with the design of the mosaics, while their execution was done by Tiffany-trained J.L. Holzer.

In 1977, the building was modernized; the project included a new glass connector along Garland Court. With the opening of the Harold Washington Library in October 1991, the structure ceased to be used as a library and became exclusively a cultural center.

It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1976.



The interior of the old Public Library includes stained glass ceilings and intricate mosaics, such as these in Preston Bradley Hall.



STREETSCAPE FEATURES

Date of Streetlights: 1910-15

Date of Canopies: 1921-24

During its development, the section of Michigan Avenue facing Grant Park was furnished with above-average, quality light fixtures and street furniture in the public way. Often, these improvements were custom-designed for Michigan Avenue, in keeping with its character as a distinctive ornamental boulevard.

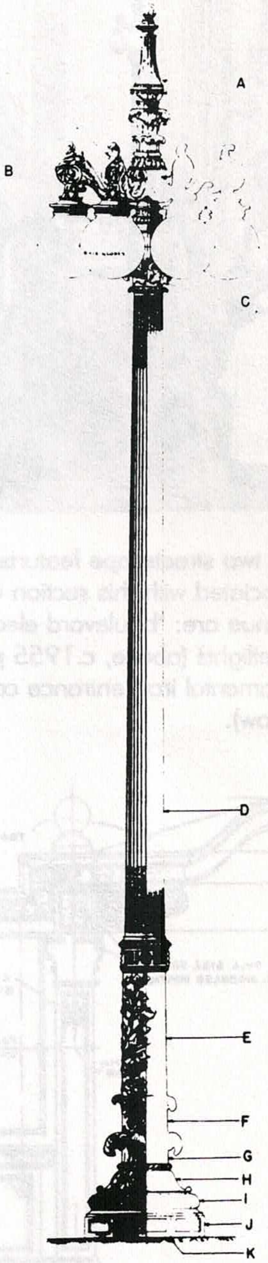
Streetlights

The most noticeable of these public improvements were the streetlights, which repeatedly changed with evolving technologies. Views of Michigan Avenue between 1850 and 1915 show a variety of lighting standards, beginning with gas fixtures and ending with a progression of electrical fixtures.

However, the fixtures most associated with Michigan Avenue during the development of the present-day streetwall were the distinctive "boulevard electroliers" that were installed in 1910-15, when the street was widened from two to four lanes. These classically detailed ornamental iron poles extended more than one story in height, with a projecting ring of glass globes suspended from ornamental arms.

Regularly spaced along both sides of the street, their picturesque profile and ring of lights created a distinctive border vista to the entire thoroughfare. As Michigan Avenue became a popular nighttime recreational automobile thoroughfare in the 1920s, the combination of the ornamental light poles and the moving lights of passing automobiles created a unique effect that was extensively mentioned in written accounts of the period.

These fixtures were replaced in the 1950s with unornamented fixtures that were then standard throughout the city at that time, thereby removing an important element of Michigan Avenue's distinct identity.



For 50 years, this type of streetlight was used along Michigan Avenue, south of the river.

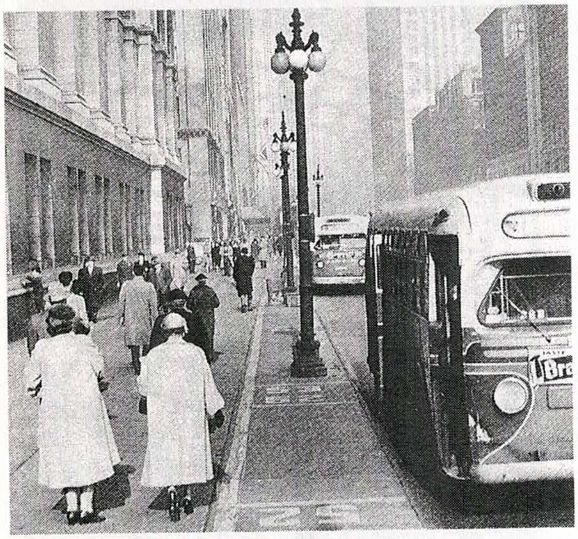
Entrance canopies

Still extant, however, are the two ornamental iron canopies that were erected in the 1920s at the entrances to pedestrian underpasses at Randolph and Van Buren streets. These were built with the dual purpose of providing direct access to the then-recently recessed tracks of the Illinois Central commuter railroad (immediately to the east of Michigan Avenue), as well as to allow pedestrians to reach Grant Park without crossing the busy boulevard.

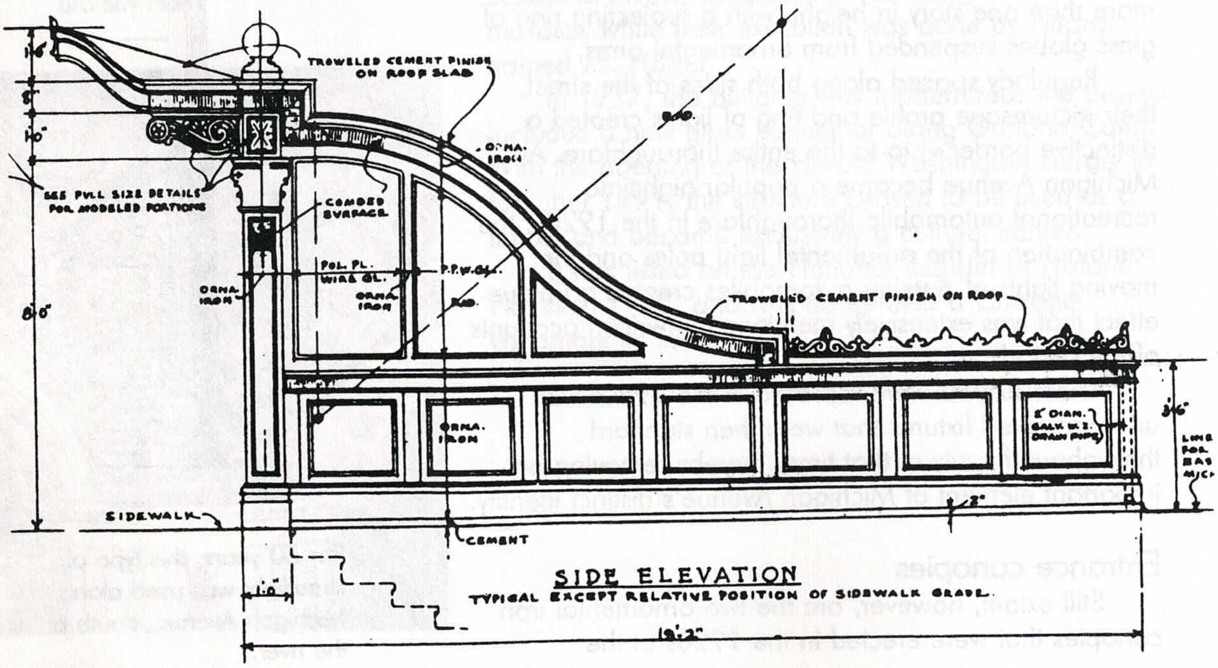
The canopies were erected by the Illinois Central Railroad, in collaboration with the South Park Commission. Recently refurbished, these iron-and-glass entrance canopies still reflect their original design and prominence on the Michigan Avenue streetscape, while complementing the designs of buildings along the streetwall.

In the 1950s, several new canopies were built to serve the underground Grant Park garages. They were executed in a modern-style design that lacks the quality of detail in the original canopies and is not as compatible with the adjacent buildings.

On the other hand, the new bronze canopy that was installed in the late 1980s, in front of the Railway Exchange Building, is compatible with the classical grammar of the original Michigan Avenue street furniture.



The two streetscape features most associated with this section of Michigan Avenue are: "boulevard electrolier" streetlights (above, c.1955 photo) and ornamental iron entrance canopies (below).


1'6"
8"
10"
8'0"
TROWELED CEMENT FINISH ON ROOF SLAB
ORNA. IRON
SEE FULL SIZE DETAILS FOR MODELED PORTIONS
COMBED SURFACE
POL. PL. WIRE GL.
P.P.W.GL.
ORNA. IRON
ORNA. IRON
RAD.
RAD.
TROWELED CEMENT FINISH ON ROOF
ORNA. IRON
3'6"
3" DIAM. GALV. W.I. DRAIN PIPE
LINE FOR BASE MICH
SIDEWALK
CEMENT
2"
1'0"
SIDE ELEVATION
TYPICAL EXCEPT RELATIVE POSITION OF SIDEWALK GRADE.
19'2"

Chapter Three

Criteria for Designation

Designation of the Historic Michigan Boulevard District is recommended because the district meets six of the seven criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Chicago Municipal Code.

CRITERION 1

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

Michigan Avenue has always played a special role in the architectural, cultural, economic, and social evolution of Chicago. As early as 1836, when the space which is now Grant Park was designated as "Public Ground--A Common to Remain Forever Open, Clear and Free of any Buildings, or Other Obstruction Whatever," the distinctive character of Michigan Avenue as an "edge street" was set. Its first significance during 1830-1885 was as a fashionable residential street with a marvelous lakefront promenade. Beginning in the 1880s, luxury hotels and high class showrooms for commercial purposes were constructed to take advantage of the street's distinct "off-Loop" identity and, equally important, unblocked sunlight.

During the late 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s, Michigan Avenue became the locus for a number of the city's most prestigious cultural institutions devoted to art, music, literature, and the theater. This was a time when Chicago was coming of age culturally and was striving to proclaim this by grand civic endeavors. A concentration of cultural and public institutions remains on Michigan Avenue today, making the street a prime example of civic-oriented development.

The presence of cultural institutions, the proximity to the Loop, and the impressive view of Lake Michigan also made Michigan Avenue the most desirable location for grand hotels, exclusive private clubs, and prestigious corporate offices. The *Chicago Plan* of *1909* acknowledged this special quality: "Office buildings, hotels, clubs, theaters, music-halls, and shops of the first order as to size and architecture line the western side of the avenue, the Park opposite their fronts insuring light, air, and an agreeable outlook."

No other street in the city reflects as well or as fully as Michigan Avenue the development of Chicago from its earliest days as a fort on the edge of a prairie by a lake to a commercial metropolis with a handsome skyline along a grand, man-made lakefront and park.

CRITERION 2

Its location as a site of a significant historic event which may or may not have taken place within or involved the use of any existing improvements.

Only in isolated instances within this district does this criterion apply.

CRITERION 3

Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

There is a long list of persons associated with the Historic Michigan Boulevard District. Possibly the most prominent is Daniel Burnham who occupies a legendary place in the annals of both architectural history and city planning. His aim was to bring to Chicago the best of Europe's urban environment; the Railway Exchange and Peoples Gas buildings, which he designed for locations along the streetwall, captured this ideal in their classical formal character while still remaining American in their sound functional planning. His *Chicago Plan of 1909* accentuated the necessity for the improvement of Grant Park and, when finally implemented, greatly enhanced the streetwall. Burnham also played a major role in the cultural life of Chicago during the years around the turn-of-the-century; his design for Orchestra Hall is evidence of this.

Another important figure was Aaron Montgomery Ward. As a substantial property owner on Michigan Avenue, Ward, an unlikely environmental evangelist, crusaded relentlessly to keep Grant Park as an open space free of obstructions thus assuring that Michigan Avenue retained its unique quality as an edge street.

Several figures from the development community also deserve mention. Among them are Ferdinand Peck, heir to a family real estate fortune and the sole, single-minded force behind the Auditorium Theater, and Shepherd Brooks of Boston who directed architects Holabird & Roche to create a design for the Monroe Building to complement the adjacent University Club. Also important are John B. and Tracy C. Drake. developers and proprietors of the Blackstone Hotel. Another family prominent in the hotel business, James W. Stevens and his son Ernest J., made a substantial contribution to the development of Michigan Avenue with the building of what is now the Chicago Hilton and Towers.

No other street reflects as well the development of Chicago, from its earliest days as a fort to its growth as a commmercial metropolis.

Deserving of recognition from Chicago's cultural fraternity include: Charles Curtiss, businessman and patron of the arts, who persuaded the Studebaker brothers to convert their warehouse and showroom into an artist's center, and Theodore Thomas, conductor of Chicago's premier symphony orchestra, who lobbied for an independent home for the orchestra and finally found it on Michigan Avenue.

CRITERION 4

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

The Historic Michigan Boulevard District has practically no parallel in Chicago in terms of an assemblage of architecture marked by overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship. Testament to this are the dozen designations either on the National Register of Historic Places or as official Chicago Landmarks.

The three Chicago Landmarks are: the Auditorium Building (designated September 15, 1976), the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center (designated November 15, 1976), and the Fine Arts Building (designated June 7, 1978). Designation for the Gage Group is pending, having been recommended to the City Council on May 24, 1985.

Nine of the 29 buildings in the proposed district have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places: Auditorium Building (also a National Historic Landmark), Blackstone Hotel, Chicago Public Library, Fine Arts Building, Gage Group, Municipal Courts Building, Orchestra Hall (also a National Historic Landmark), Peoples Gas Building, and the Railway Exchange Building.

Most of the structures which comprise the district were built between 1882 and 1930. They reflect in general the prevailing historical eclecticism, with an excellent cross-section of the commercial development typical of the period. While working in an academic conservative tradition, the designers were especially creative in the use of historical forms and motifs. The buildings are executed in fine materials with superior craftsmanship and attention to detail, and they are reflective of the high caliber of the tenants who occupied the structures.

The high visibility of the buildings along the streetwall also encouraged the designers to provide exceptional details for the buildings' entire elevations. Most of the buildings had clearly defined storefronts, ornamented skins, and finely detailed cornices.

CRITERION 5

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

Chicago has no other street whose built environment is a virtual encyclopedia of the city's best designers, representing the work of every major and historically significant architectural firm. From approximately 1882 to 1930, when the character of the streetwall was established, every important Chicago architectural firm of that era is represented, some more than once. Further, each firm's Michigan Avenue building is a superior example of the type and style of architecture in which they excelled and for which they achieved their outstanding reputations.

Holabird & Roche, about whom architectural historian Robert Bruegmann writes, "no firm left a greater mark on a large American city," designed seven buildings (the Gage Group, the University Club, the Crane Company, Monroe, and McCormick buildings, and the Congress and Stevens hotels). Adler and Sullivan, considered one of the most important architectural partnerships in late-nineteenth-century Chicago, spearheaded engineering and design developments that would have an impact on modern architecture the world over. In addition to the Auditorium, Michigan Avenue contains an example of Louis Sullivan's work as a solo practitioner in 18 S. Michigan Ave., part of the Gage Group.

Benjamin Marshall, who with his partner Charles Fox, would give the city some of its most sumptuous apartment buildings and deluxe hotels, is well-represented by the Blackstone Hotel and the Karpen-Standard Oil Building. And Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, known as Chicago's leader in the creation of corporate headquarters, created a quintessential example in the Straus Building.

Three D.H. Burnham and Company buildings are located along this portion of Michigan Avenue (the Railway Exchange and Peoples Gas buildings and Orchestra Hall). All are classical buildings which became Burnham's hallmark following the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. By 1919, the firm had outstripped even the all-powerful New York firm of McKim, Mead and White in terms of volume of design, becoming the organizational prototype for today's large corporate architectural offices. The firm not only produced uniformly high-quality buildings but also city plans for Washington, D.C., Cleveland, and San Francisco. Not the least of these is the one Burnham wrote, along with Edward Bennett, for Chicago in 1909.

Other notable architects represented along Michigan Avenue include Henry Ives Cobb, Richard Schmidt, Clinton J. Warren, John Van Osdell II, Christian Albert Eckstorm, and Jarvis Hunt.

The proposed district is a virtual encyclopedia of the city's best designers from 1880 to 1930.

CRITERION 6

Its representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, social, or other theme expressed through distinctive areas, districts, places, buildings, structures, works of art, or other objects that may or may not be contiguous.

The special character of the Historic Michigan Boulevard District is created not only by the interface with Grant Park but also by the row of buildings which are sympathetic in scale, mass, materials, and color on the street's west side.

The structures collectively convey a strong visual sense of the past. They are an obvious unit, and they embody several characteristics that typically define a historic district. For example:

- With a few exceptions, the buildings were constructed between 1882 and 1930.
- They were designed by architects working within the same general stylistic framework of design and technology.
- There is a limited range of building heights (with one exception), providing a generally consistent cornice line.
- Masonry materials--brick, stone, and terra cotta--are common facade materials.
- Buildings are built out to the lot line and completely cover the lot, creating a strong linear definition to the west side of the street (in contrast to the soft edge along Grant Park). There are virtually no arcades or building setbacks at the ground level.
- There is a consistent distinction in the design of the buildings between window and wall. Windows are usually punched into the wall, and large expanses of glass, such as in curtain-wall construction, generally are not a part of the streetwall architecture.
- The buildings have a uniform one or two-story base, with two-story entry spaces and lobbies.

- The ground floors usually contain retail space or display windows.

CRITERION 7

Its unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Chicago.

The Historic Michigan Boulevard District is one of the most enduring images of Chicago. Millions see it each year: from Lake Michigan, Lake Shore Drive, as a backdrop to Grant Park festivals and concerts, and as a postcard view mailed by visitors to the city. References to Michigan Avenue as a distinct and unique feature of Chicago are found in many history books, magazines, and tourist guides.

An architectural historian writing in 1990 described the proposed district as having "a coherence and dignity virtually unmatched in urban America." While many major cities, both European and American, have "edge" streets, a writer in the 1920s noted that "the noble one-sided avenue of Chicago proudly holds its own."

This wall of buildings crystallizes much of what is emblematic of the city: an incomparable natural setting along Lake Michigan, bordered by great parks and internationally revered architecture. It is one of the most readily recognized and historic portraits of Chicago.

The Historic Michigan Boulevard District is one of the most enduring images of Chicago.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Based on this evaluation of the Historic Michigan Boulevard District, the staff recommends that all exterior aspects of all structures, all important lobbies and other significant interior spaces (to be decided during the designation process), and the entire street right-of-way of Michigan Avenue between Randolph Street and Roosevelt Road be identified as significant historical and architectural features. The right-of-way includes all distinguishing characteristics of the street such as: sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, and entrances to underground facilities.

APPENDICES

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Leon R. Pescheret, from Chicago Welcomes You, 1933 *(opposite p. 1 top right)*
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William A. Rooney, from Architectural Ornament in Chicago *(p. 15)*
Chicago Transit Authority *(pp. 16 top right, 72 top)*
From Holabird & Roche - Holabird & Root *(pp. 25, 27, 31, 58)*
From History of Chicago, by Andreas *(p. 29 top)*
From Chicago Central Business and Office Directory, 1929 *(pp. 34 right, 35 top)*
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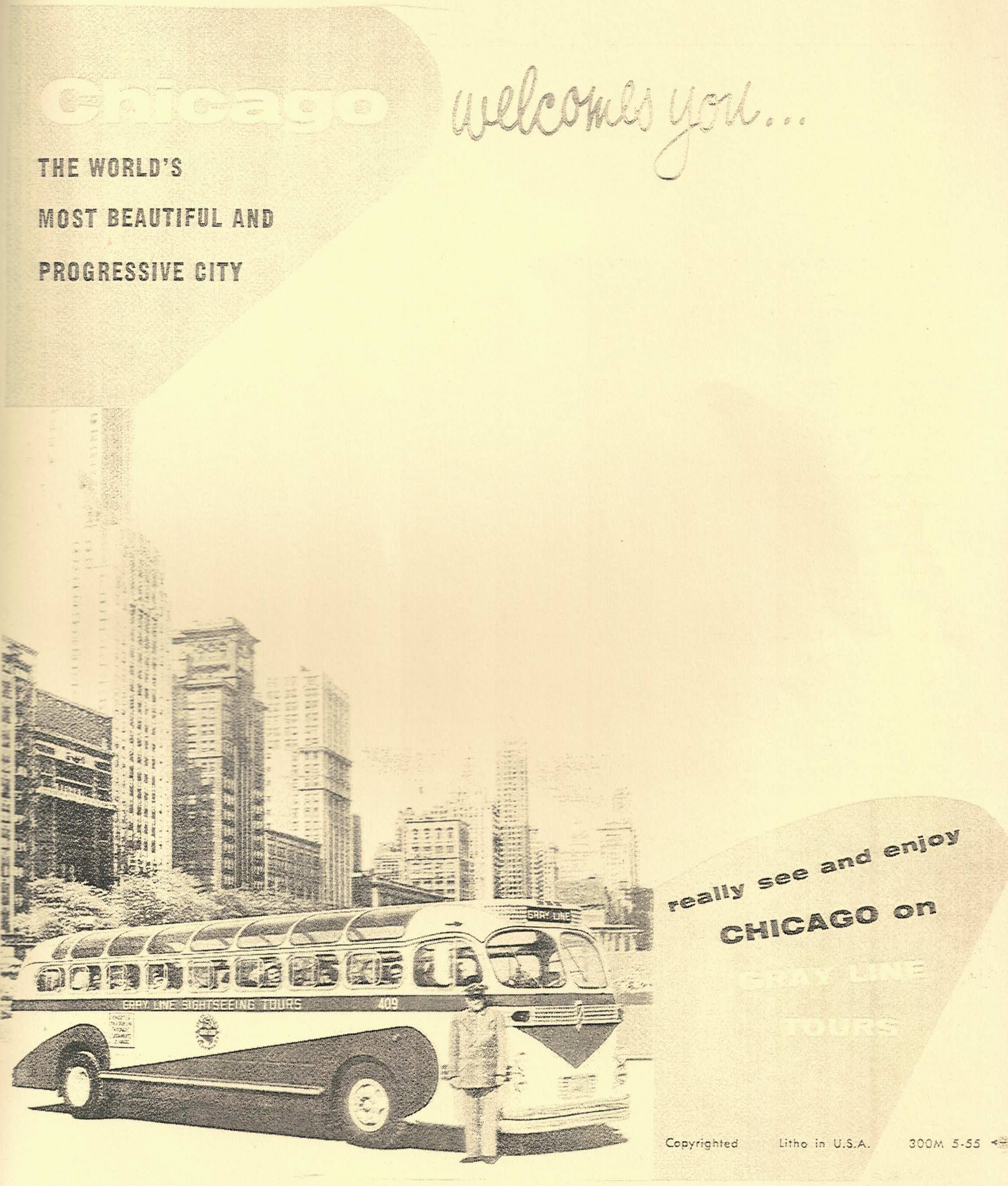
From A Half Century of Chicago Building *(p. 45)*
From The Sky's the Limit *(p. 47 bot.)*
From Orchestra Hall: A Chronology of Its Architecture, 1980 *(p. 50)*
J. Sherwin Murphy *(p. 52 bot.)*
From A Heritage: University Club of Chicago *(p. 60 right)*
From Inland Architect & News Record, Aug. 1900 *(p. 62)*
From Chicago: Creating New Traditions, 1976 *(p. 66 left)*
From Handbook for Architects and Builders, 1923 *(p. 66 right)*
Barbara Crane *(p. 70)*



Chicago welcomes you...

THE WORLD'S
MOST BEAUTIFUL AND
PROGRESSIVE CITY

really see and enjoy
CHICAGO on
GRAY LINE
TOURS

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GRAY LINE
GRAY LINE SIGHTSEEING TOURS
409

An image synonymous with the city, Michigan Avenue has been used in countless tourist promotions, such as this 1955 Gray Line bus tour brochure.

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